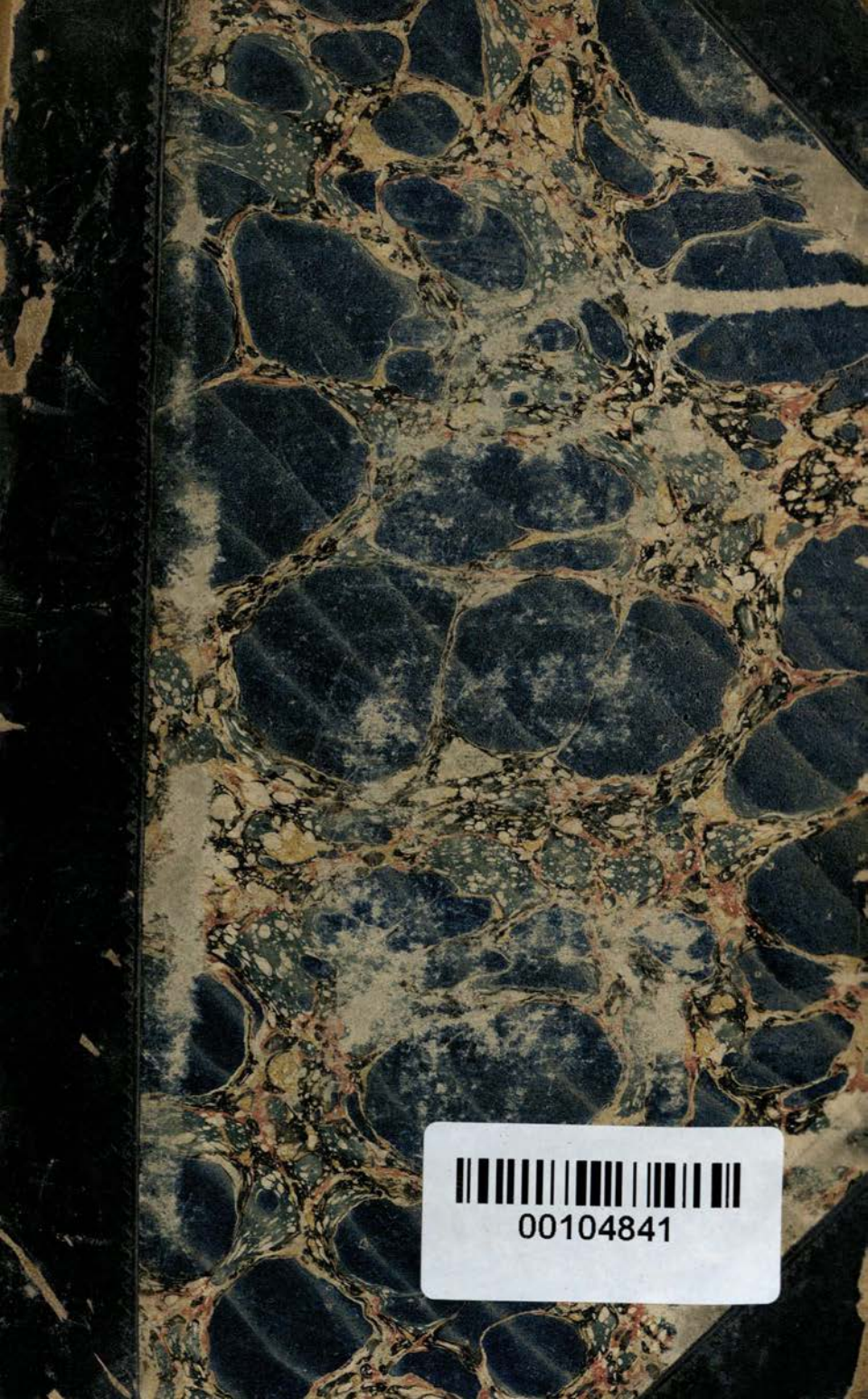

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LETTERS

ON

E G Y P T,

CONTAINING,

A PARALLEL BETWEEN THE MANNERS OF ITS ANCIENT AND MODERN INHABITANTS, ITS COMMERCE, AGRICULTURE, GOVERNMENT, AND RELIGION;

WITH

THE DESCENT OF LOUIS IX. AT DAMIETTA,

EXTRACTED FROM

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ac

JOINVILLE, AND ARABIAN AUTHORS.

TRANSLATED

FROM THE FRENCH OF M. SAVARY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

THIRD EDITION.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR G. G. AND J. ROBINSON, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1799.

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THE great attention and labour beſtowed upon the preſent tranſlation of theſe Letters, and the remarks which in the courſe of it have preſented themſelves, ſeem to require the following ſhort account of what has been done.

Finding, on conſulting a few of the quotations in the French, various errors had crept into the text, moſt of which, probably, and many, certainly, were errors of the preſs, it was thought neceſſary to refer to the original authors: thoſe, therefore, who ſhall think proper to compare the tranſlation with the French, will find many deviations in the quoted paſſages; but, if they ſhall pleaſe, further, to refer to the Latin, Greek, and Arabic writers, cited, it is preſumed, they will find ſuch deviations are not errors, but corrections. We mean not to

affirm miſtakes may not ſtill exiſt; though we ſcarcely can hope ſufficient credit will be given for the labour beſtowed in ſearching voluminous books to find a ſingle quotation. The induſtry with which M. Savary has read the ancients, to obtain information on his ſubject, aſtoniſhes the reader; but it were to be wiſhed, by thoſe who are inclined to refer, and examine the accuracy or ſpirit of the paſſages cited, he had continually noted his editions, books, and pages; ſo that they might have been turned to without trouble. Not aware, ourſelves, of the numerous quotations which were to follow in the ſecond volume, we neglected this method, in the firſt, and continued ſo to do, partly for the ſake of uniformity, and, partly, in deference to M. Savary; neither indeed could we obtain every author, or find every paſſage he has cited; therefore it was, in part, impracticable.

Were we to note our deviations, and ſupport them by citing the paſſages in queſtion, our preface would aſſume the form and length of a diſſertation; we ſhall only ſay, therefore, we reſt our juſtification on the paſſages themſelves; and, imagining we ſhall not, often, at leaſt, be detected in having injured the author by our emendations,

dations, we truſt we ſhall rather deſerve applauſe than cenſure.

The ſpelling of words tranſlated from languages little known, as the Coptic and Arabic are, into French, and thence re-tranſlated into Engliſh, is a difficulty frequently found very embarraſſing; nor is the French itſelf, in this work, always conſiſtent. This we muſt plead in excuſe for thoſe few places where we have committed the like fault. The French ſpelling uſually endeavours at the original pronunciation; to give which, in Engliſh, the ſpelling ſhould be very different. In ſome few places this has occaſioned us to vary from the original; but, in moſt, we have not dared, leſt we ſhould ſeem to disfigure names which the eye has been accuſtomed to ſee written in another manner. Thus the words *Cachef*, and *Eccherif*, are, as we ſuppoſe, pronounced *Caſhef*, and *Ekſherif*; *Boulac* is *Boolac*; *Gibel* is *Jeebel*; *Malaoui* is *Malawee*, &c. The village of Semennoud is, by an error of the French, not detected in time, ſpelt *Samanout*, on the map. We believe no other error of this kind is committed, except ſo trifling as to be immediately ſeen, and corrected, by an intelligent reader.

Our calculation of the weight of the granite,

in the note, Vol. II. page 349, differs from that of M. Savary; but if, inſtead of allowing with him the ſides to be ſixty feet high, ſix feet are deducted for the thickneſs of the ceiling, which was of another ſtone, the product then will be nearly the ſame; and this deduction, we imagine, the author made, but it is not ſo expreſſed.

Ancient meaſures are frequently reduced to French, by M. Savary; but, as the learned do not all agree in their eſtimates, we have generally ſubſtituted a literal tranſlation of the Greek and Latin writers quoted; and, in ſuch places, uſed the ſtadium inſtead of the league.

The words Ox and Bull, *Bœuf* and *Taureau*, ſeem to have been uſed with a blameable indiſcrimination, both by French and Engliſh writers, when ſpeaking of ancient Egyptian deities. Apis is called the ſacred Ox, by M. Savary, but it is evident this god was a Bull: he had a heifer preſented him once a year, and the ſtrange practice of the Egyptian women, related by Diodorus Siculus (lib. i. ſec. 2), and noticed by M. Savary, is a farther confirmation. Mnevis and Onuphis are ſpoken of in the ſame confuſed manner, though there can be little doubt they all were bulls.

We have been obliged to uſe the word port in

in the ſame ſenſe with M. Savary; and apply it to towns, and villages, ſituated on the Nile, to which boats only, not ſhips, reſort: though, in Engliſh, it uſually implies ſeaport. We have likewiſe adopted his ſpelling of the word Khalig; but the Arabic pronunciation is Khalidge. We mean not to be minute, but wiſh not, after all our induſtry, to be thought negligent.

The gentleman to whom M. Savary addreſſed his letters was M. Le Monnier, phyſician to the king of France; firſt phyſician to monſieur, his majeſty's eldeſt brother, and a member of the Academy of Sciences; the M. L. M. at the beginning of each Letter are the initials of his name, and the ſhort eulogium at the concluſion of the work is highly to his honour: it ſhows to what noble purpoſes he employs wealth and power.

The work, in the French, is dedicated to monſieur, eldeſt brother to the king of France; but we have omitted this dedication, becauſe the mode of addreſs is ſo different from any the Engliſh language is accuſtomed to, that it would render a tranſlation either ridiculous or full of Galliciſms.

The manner in which theſe letters have been received, both in France and England, is ſuperior

rior to any praiſe we can beſtow; and we ſhall only ſay M. Savary poſſeſſes a degree of erudition, judgment, imagination, and feeling, which are ſeldom united.

PRE-

PREFACE.

TRAVELS are the moſt inſtructive ſchool of man: travelling teaches us the knowledge of our ſpecies; and, by living among different nations, ſtudying their manners, religion, and government, rules may be obtained to eſtimate the manners, religion, and government of our own country. Subject to the prejudices of education, and the empire of habit, while man remains in his native land, he will view other nations through a deceptive glaſs, which, changing their forms and colours, will lead his judgment aſtray; he will be aſtoniſhed at their errors, when he himſelf ſhall be tributary to others equally great; he will laugh at and ridicule their cuſtoms, himſelf a ſlave to abſurdities not leſs extravagant.

But, having attentively examined the manners and genius of divers people, and calculated how far education, laws, and climate may influence phyſical and moral qualities, his ideas will expand,

pand, and meditation will releaſe him from the yoke of pre-conceived opinions, and cuſtoms by which his reaſon has been enchained. Then, looking toward his own country, the film will be removed from his eyes; his rooted miſtakes will be eradicated; and objects will aſſume a very different aſpect.

Before he begins his travels, a thorough knowledge of geography and hiſtory are neceſſary. The firſt will indicate the place where great events have paſſed; the latter bring them to memory: thus doubly enlightened, if he traverſes thoſe eaſtern countries where moſt aſtoniſhing revolutions have, more than once, changed the face of the earth, wherever his footſteps lead, each object will become animated; ruins, marbles, and mountains will ſpeak, moſt eloquently, to his underſtanding and his heart. Here, beneath brambles, he will read the following inſcription, with which his country honoured the manes of a hero: *Sta, viator, heroem calcas.* This cliff, hanging over the abyſs of ſeas, will call to mind the fatal end of the deſpairing Sappho, who, by the energy and ſublimity of her poetry, merited the name of the tenth muſe. Here the melancholy remains of two famous republics will retrace to memory man

man ennobled by the love of liberty, his ſoul aggrandiſed, and every faculty of the body and mind perfectioned. How numerous will be his compariſons between what was and what is! How immenſe the chain of recollection! He, however, will only notice great actions, and preſent the reader with rapid ſtrokes, where the paſt and preſent may clearly unite, and touch without being confounded.

At beholding the magnificent monuments Egypt ſtill poſſeſſes, he will imagine what that people muſt have been whoſe works only, of all ancient nations, have reſiſted the ravages of time: a people who ſeemed to labour for immortality, and among whom Orpheus, Homer, Herodotus, and Plato went to obtain that knowledge with which they enriched their native land. How will he regret that no efforts of the learned have hitherto removed the veil from the numerous hieroglyphics of theſe wealthy regions; the intelligence of which characters would enlighten ancient hiſtory, and, perhaps, caſt a luminous ray into the darkneſs of the firſt ages of the earth!

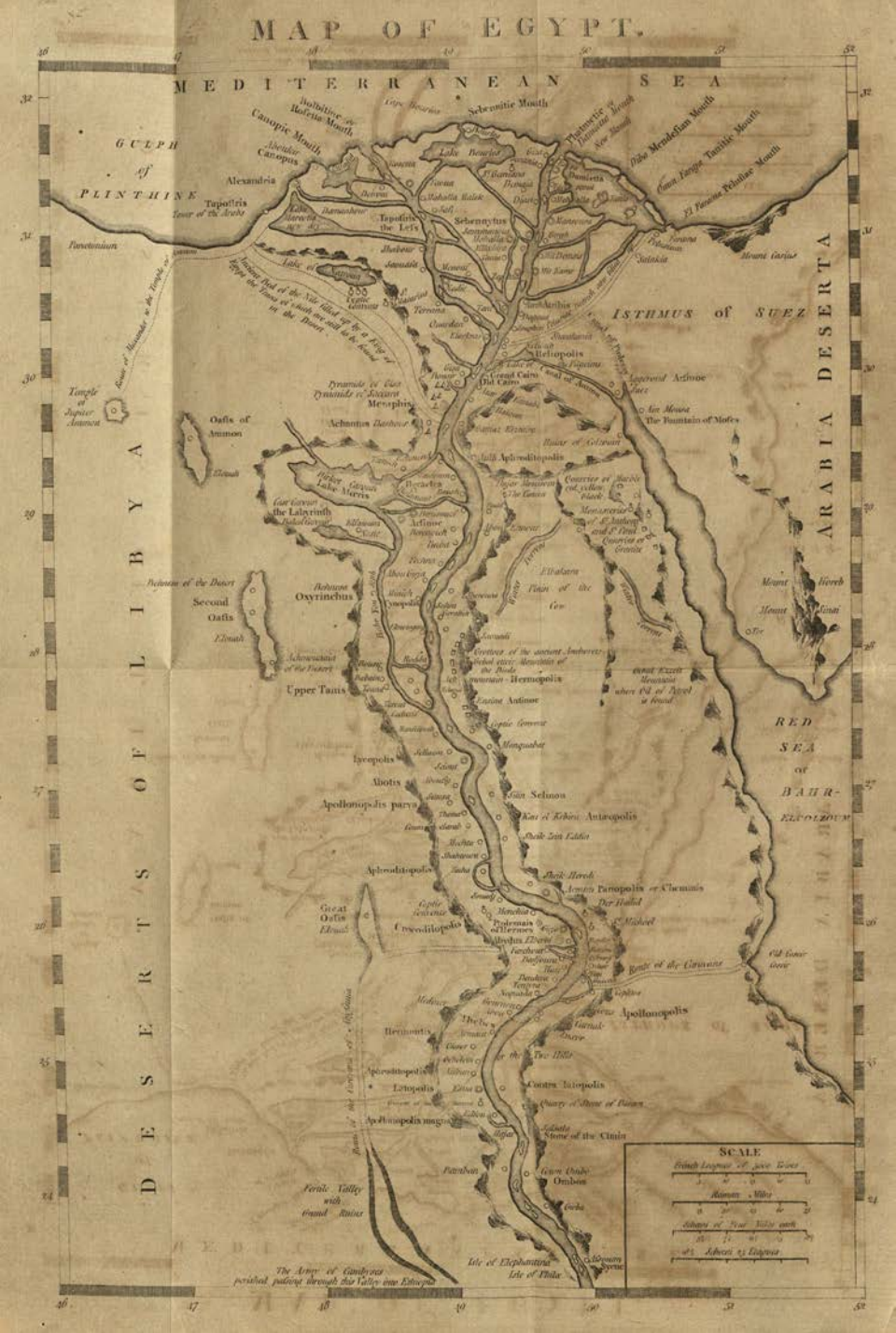
Become a citizen of the world, he will riſe ſuperior to partiality, and, while deſcribing cities and countries, will give to truth the guidance

of

of his pen. But let him ſhun the fault of many other travellers, and not make himſelf the principal figure in his picture, nor throw all the light on himſelf, and ſhade and obſcure the other parts and perſons: let him avoid affectation, either to ſhow his ſuperior knowledge or add weight to his opinions. Such are the requiſites he ought to poſſeſs who would travel to advantage; and ſuch the principles he ſhould imbibe. To ſuperior intelligence, and a ſpirit of obſervation, he muſt add that quick, deep, and penetrating ſenſibility which alone can make himſelf or others feel, effectually. Should he remain unmoved when he views the place where Pompey the Great was aſſaſſinated; ſhould the wonders of Egypt not ſtrike him with aſtoniſhment and admiration; ſhould he not weep over the auguſt ruins of Alexandria, and the loſs of 400,000 volumes, devoured by fire; ſhould not enthuſiaſm ſeize him, at beholding the ruins of Lacedæmon, Athens and Thebes; let him beware of writing: nature has not formed him to tranſmit thoſe feeling, thoſe ſublime impreſſions, which objects ſo grand ſhould inſpire.

Such ſenſations, I imagine, I have had; but whether I have conveyed them with the force neceſſary to render my travels intereſting, the public

public muſt determine. If the reader accompanies me with pleaſure, if the reality of my deſcriptions bring conviction, if the geographical and hiſtorical details inſtruct, if the memorable events I call to mind are appoſite, and the parallel of ancient and modern manners be traced by judgment and reflection, I ſhall have obtained the height of my wiſhes; and all the fatigues, dangers, and labours I have undergone will be amply rewarded.


MAP OF EGYPT.
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
GULPH of PLINTHINE
DESERTS OF LIBYA
ARABIA DESERTA
ISTHMUS of SUEZ
RED SEA or BAHR-ELQOLZOUM
Sebennitic Mouth
Canopic Mouth
Alexandria
Taposiris
Parætonium
Oasis of Ammon
Second Oasis
Great Oasis
Heliopolis
Great Cairo
Old Cairo
Memphis
Achanish
Aphroditopolis
Oxyrinchus
Upper Tanis
Apollonopolis parva
Thebes
Apollonopolis
Ombos
Elephantine
Mount Horeb
Mount Sinai
Scale

LETTERS

ON

EGYPT.

LETTER I.

A general deſcription of Egypt, and of the changes it has undergone from the moſt remote antiquity to the preſent time. Inquiries concerning the topography of the country, the labours of the Pharoahs to turn the channel of the Nile, and the original formation and gradual enlargement of the Delta.

To M. L. M.

Alexandria, July the 24th, 1777.

YOU complain, Sir, of my ſilence, and claim my promiſes. "Where," ſay you, "are thoſe pictures of Oriental manners, which, knowing your inclination to obſerve, I was led to expect? What! have you been traverſing Egypt theſe

three years, and not written one word concerning a country the moſt celebrated the earth contains?"

Such, Sir, are your reproaches. But be pleaſed to recollect the advice which you yourſelf gave me, when I left Paris, and in that you will find my juſtification. "You are going, young "man, into a foreign country, among a people "who will be new to you. Obſerve the influ- "ence of climate, the power of religion, the "imperious ſway of ancient cuſtoms, and the "tyranny which deſpotiſm exerts over ſuffering "humanity; in theſe you muſt find the hiſtory "of their vices and their virtues. To facilitate "this ſtudy learn the Eaſtern languages; live "among, and converſe with, Greeks, Turks, "and Arabs; and, that you may ſee them ſuch "as they are, leave your prejudices behind you. "Be it your endeavour to paint the people you "behold after Nature; let the Turk reſemble "himſelf, and do not give us a picture of Paris "inſtead of Grand Cairo."

Such were the precepts dictated by your wiſdom; your judgement gave them weight, your friendſhip rendered them dear to me, and they have never been forgotten. Three years of travel, pain, and labour, have been conſecrated to

my

my deſire to put them in practice; had I written ſooner, I had been leſs obedient.

It appears neceſſary, Sir, firſt to deſcribe the limits of Egypt, and thoſe revolutions which time and the labours of man have effected; the map, which accompanies this letter, will be of ſome aſſiſtance to you in acquiring the firſt of theſe. To the authorities of the ancients, the diſcoveries of Father Sicard, Pococke, Niebuhr, and D'Anville, I have added my own obſervations. This laſt geographer, whoſe learned penetration could diſcover truth among the numerous contradictions of travellers, has often been of great ſervice to me; nor do I ever quit him but in places which, he having never ſeen, it was impoſſible for him to avoid error.

Egypt is bounded on the north by the Mediterranean, by a chain of mountains, which ſeparate it from Nubia, on the ſouth; and on the eaſt by the Red Sea, and the Iſthmus of Suez; its weſtern limits are the deſerts of Lybia, in the midſt of which ſtood the temple of Jupiter Ammon. Its greateſt length is about two hundred and twenty-five leagues, extending from Syene, which is ſituated under the tropic of Cancer, to Cape Burlos, which is the moſt pro-

jecting land of the Delta, and almoſt terminates the 32d degree of latitude.

Drawing a line from the ruins of Peluſium to the tower of the Arabs, formerly called Tapoſiris, we ſhall find its greateſt width to be ſixty-eight leagues; and this meaſurement agrees with that of the ancients, who computed fifty-four leagues, croſſing the Delta from Peluſium to Canopus, and fourteen from Canopus to Tapoſiris (*a*).

Egypt is divided into Upper and Lower; the former is a long valley, beginning at Syene, and

(*a*) The baſe of the Delta, from Peluſium to Canopus, now called Alboukir, contained, according to Diodorus Siculus and Strabo, 1300 ſtadia, which we may eſtimate at 54 leagues; to which add 14 leagues from Canopus to the tower of the Arabs, and the amount will be 68 leagues. Herodotus reckoned 60 ſchœni, that is to ſay 80 leagues, between Mount Caſius and the bay of Plintina, where Tapoſiris ſtood. Mount Caſius ſtands 12 leagues to the eaſt of Peluſium; therefore ſubtract 12 from 80 and the remainder will ſtill be 68 leagues from Peluſium to Tapoſiris. The two geographers, firſt mentioned, have evidently meaſured the ſame extent of country in a right line, and did not, like Herodotus, follow the baſe of the Delta; for, between the age of Herodotus and the time in which they lived, that part of Egypt had increaſed, by the immenſe quantity of ſand which the courſe of the Nile carries with it; and, had they followed the ſea-ſhore, the admeaſurement would have been conſiderably augmented.

ending

ending at Grand Cairo. Two ridges of mountains, which take their departure from the laſt cataract, form the lofty outlines of Upper Egypt: their parallel direction is from north to ſouth, till they reach Grand Cairo, where, ſeparating to the right and left, the one ſtretches towards mount Colzoum, and the other terminates in ſand-banks, near Alexandria. The former conſiſts of high rocks and cliffs, the latter of ſandy hills, the baſe of which is a calcareous ſtone. Beyond theſe mountains are deſerts, bounded by the Red Sea on the eaſt, and extending over Africa to the weſt; in the centre lies that long plain the greateſt width of which does not exceed nine leagues. Here the Nile rolls his waters between two inſurmountable barriers: now ſilent and tranquil, following the courſe which nature and art have traced; and anon an impetuous torrent, red with the ſands of Ethiopia, ſwelling, overflowing his banks, and ſpreading his waters over the country for the ſpace of two hundred leagues. In this celebrated valley, man firſt ſought, and firſt beheld, the light of ſcience, whoſe radiance, diffuſing itſelf over Greece (*b*), has

(*b*) Herodotus, Strabo, and Diodorus Siculus, poſitively affirm the Greeks obtained moſt of their knowledge from

has ſucceſſively enlightened the reſt of the world. This valley, though ſtill as fruitful as in the happy days of Thebes, is much leſs cultivated; its famous cities are laid level with the duſt; laws and arts have been trodden under foot by deſpotiſm and ignorance, and their throne uſurped.

Lower Egypt includes all the country lying between Grand Cairo, the Mediterranean, the Iſthmus of Suez, and Lybia: ſkirted by arid ſands, this immenſe plain contains ſlips of land well cultivated, on the borders of the canals, and in its centre that triangular iſland to which the Greeks gave the name of Delta, formed by the two branches of the Nile, which divide at *Batn el Bakara* (the Cow's Belly), and empty themſelves into the ſea below Damietta and Roſetta. This iſland, the moſt fruitful on earth, has loſt much of its extent, ſince the time when Canopus and Peluſium were its limits (*c*). The eaſtern bulwark of Egypt having been deſtroyed by conquerors, and thoſe who cultivated the

Egypt. Thence it was that Orpheus and Homer brought mythology, and the daughters of Danaus the myſteries of Ceres. The philoſophers of Greece ſtudied aſtronomy there, and their legiſlators the principles of government.

(*c*) Strabo, lib. xvii.

earth

earth becoming expoſed to the inroads of the Arabs, the inhabitants have retired farther into the country. The canals, which with their ſtreams brought fertility, are dried up: and the earth ceaſing to be watered, and continually expoſed to the burning heats of the ſun, is become a barren ſand. Scattered over the plains which formerly contained fruitful fields, and flouriſhing cities (*d*), on the Peluſiac, Tanitic, and Mendeſian arms, which all flowed from the Damietta branch of the Nile, we only find, at preſent, miſerable hamlets, ſurrounded by date-trees, and deſerts. Theſe canals, formerly navigable (*e*), bear little reſemblance to their former ſtate, and no longer communicate with the lake Menzala, except a very little while during the time of the inundation; they are dry all the reſt of the year. By digging them, and removing the mud which the river has left, ſince the Turks have been maſters of Egypt, the country they traverſe would become fertile, and the Delta reſtored to its ancient grandeur.

Having obtained a general idea of Egypt,

(*d*) Bubaſtus, Peluſium, Phacuſa, and all the cities which ſtood in the eaſtern part of the Delta, are totally deſtroyed.

(*e*) The Peluſiac, Tanitic, and Mendeſian branches were formerly navigable.

pleaſe, Sir, to fix your attention on this rich country, and the changes it has undergone. Anterior to thoſe times of which hiſtory preſerves any certain record, a people deſcended from the mountains, which border on the cataract, into the valley the Nile inundates (*f*), then an impracticable moraſs, overrun with reeds and bulruſhes. After repeated, and often fatal trials, they diſcovered ſome ſalutary plants; among theſe were the lotus (*g*), which Herodotus calls the lily of the Nile; the reed we have named the ſugar-cane, and which in this

(*f*) Herodotus, p. 40, Euterpe; Diodorus Siculus, lib. i, and Strabo, lib. xvii, all aſcertain the ſame fact.

(*g*) The lotus is an aquatic plant peculiar to Egypt, which grows in rivulets, and by the ſide of lakes; there are two ſpecies, the one bearing a white, the other a blueiſh flower. The calyx of the lotus blows like that of a large tulip, diffuſing a ſweetneſs like the ſmell of the lily. The root of the firſt ſpecies is round, reſembling a potatoe; and is eaten by the inhabitants who live near the lake Menzala. The rivulets, near Damietta, are covered with this majeſtic flower, which riſes about two feet above the water. Mr. Paw affirms it is no longer found in Egypt, and deſcribes a plant no way reſembling the lotus. *Recherches ſur les Egyptiens & les Chinois, page* 150. No wonder this learned man was miſtaken, ſince moſt of the travellers who have been in Egypt never ſaw the lotus, which does not grow on the great canals of the Nile, but among the inland rivulets.

country

country has preſerved its primitive appellation *caſſab*, or reed (*h*); the colocaſium (*i*), the onion, and the bean. Many years paſſed away before they thought of cultivating theſe native plants; but neceſſity begets induſtry. He to whom chance, or meditation, made any lucky diſcovery was a king, or a God (*k*). Oſiris taught men, who till then were cannibals, to feed on the fruits of the earth, inſtead of human fleſh: Iſis, otherwiſe Ceres, inſtructed them in agriculture; and both were deified. The Egyptian Hercules, the moſt ancient of the heroes ſo named, freed the Thebaïs from the monſters by which it was ravaged, and had altars erected to him. While the people of Upper Egypt were contending with wild beaſts for

(*h*) Some authors ſay the ſugar-cane was brought from India to Egypt; perhaps, the method of cultivating it only was brought. It ſeems to me to be a native of a country which produces many ſpecies of reeds, and where it grows wild. Its very name induces this belief.

(*i*) The colocaſium is a plant well known to botaniſts. It is particularly cultivated by the inhabitants of Damietta: vaſt fields overſpread with its large leaves are ſeen near this city. Its root is in the form of a cone, and larger than that of the lotus, with a taſte leſs inſipid than the potatoe.

(*k*) Diodorus Siculus, p. 24.

their

their vaſt marſhes (*l*), the ſea, according to the ancients, waſhed the foot of the mountains where the pyramids now ſtand; advancing towards the tower of the Arabs far into Lybia; overflowing a part of the Iſthmus of Suez, and forming an extenſive bay, over the country we now call the Delta. But I ſhall paſs theſe ages, and come to the times in which the Egyptians, ſubjected to religion and laws, dug canals, to give the ſtagnant waters of the Nile vent; raiſed high mounds to oppoſe its ravages; and, weary of inhabiting rocky caverns, built cities on hills thrown up by art, or nature. Boundaries were then preſcribed to the river, and the habitations of men ſecured from its torrents (*m*). Experience taught them to foreſee the ſeaſon of inundation; and geometry, meaſuring the lands which induſtry had thus acquired, aſcertained individual property. A mighty city roſe in the centre of the Thebaïs, which it was the glory of ſucceeding kings to embelliſh. Such was the magnificence of its public ſtructures that now, when more than four thouſand years have

(*l*) Herodotus, Strabo, and Diodorus Siculus relate the opinion of the Ethiopians on this ſubject.

(*m*) Herodotus, p. 40, Euterpe.

elapſed,

elapſed, its very ruins impreſs the mind with awe and admiration. Thebes flouriſhed ages before Rome was. Divided from the reſt of the world by deſerts, mountains, and ſeas, the Egyptians cultivated arts and ſciences in peace; and their unremitting labours daily extended the limits of their empire, either by raiſing banks, to ſecure their newly acquired lands, or by cutting deep drains through thoſe which ſtill were marſhy. One of the kings of Egypt, probably foreſeeing the conſequences, undertook to turn the courſe of the river (*n*), which, after meandering a hundred and fifty leagues between the mountains I have mentioned, came to an inſurmountable obſtacle, turned ſuddenly to the left, and, running ſouth of Memphis, ſpread its waters over the ſands of Lybia. This prince cut

(*n*) The prieſts ſay that Menes, the firſt king of Egypt, built a bridge over the Nile, near Memphis; before which time the river, paſſing Mount Pſammius, ran ſouth of that city, and diffuſed itſelf over the Lybian deſerts. Menes raiſed a mound a hundred ſtadia from Memphis, oppoſed its courſe, and forced it to return between the mountains; by which means its firſt bed became dry. At preſent, the Perſians, who are maſters of Egypt, repair this mound, which ſhuts up the ancient channel, at a great expence; having added new works yearly, and appointed troops to watch and preſerve it from injury. Herodotus, p. 55.

a new

a new channel to the eaſt of Memphis, raiſed a large mound, and obliged it to return between the mountains, and diſcharge itſelf into the bay that then bathed the rock on which the caſtle of Grand Cairo is built. The ancient bed of the river, and the mound which dammed up its entrance, were to be ſeen in the time of Herodotus. The Perſians repaired the mound with great care; nor is the courſe of this ancient bed unknown even at preſent; it may be traced acroſs the deſert, paſſing weſt of the lakes of Natroun, by petrified wood, maſts, and lateen yards, the wrecks of veſſels by which it was anciently navigated. The Arabs call this channel, which is now nearly filled up, *Bahr Bela Ma* (*o*), a ſea without water.

Egypt is indebted for the Delta to the labours of this monarch. The enormous weight of the waters of the Nile, diſcharging themſelves into this gulph, repelled the ſea; and the ſand and mire they carried with them, in their courſe accumulated. The Delta, very inconſiderable at firſt, roſe from the ſea, by incroaching on its limits: it was the gift of the river. Agriculture and man came to its defence, by raiſing

(*o*) Great rivers are called by the Arabs *Bahr*, or ſea.

mounds,

mounds. In the time of Mœris, who lived five hundred years before the Trojan war, the Delta was in its infancy (*p*); eight cubits were ſufficient to overflow it entirely; they rowed over it in boats; and its towns, built on artificial mounds, reſembled the iſlands of the Ægean ſea (*q*). In the age of Herodotus, fifteen cubits were neceſſary to overflow the Lower Egypt; but the Nile, at that time, inundated the country for the ſpace of two days' journey to the right and left of the Delta. Under the Roman empire, ſixteen cubits produced ſimilar effects; and, when the Arabs governed, their writers ſpeak of ſeventeen as the moſt favourable height. The ſtandard of abundance, at preſent, is eighteen cubits; but Lower Egypt is no longer overflowed; the inundation goes no farther than Grand Cairo, and the neighbouring country. The Nile, however, often riſes to two-and-twenty cubits. This phænomenon has been produced by an increaſe of mud, ſucceſſively depoſited, during ſo many ages. Art has likewiſe contributed towards it, either by raiſing the lands moſt expoſed to the action of the river,

(*p*) Herodotus, p. 41, Euterpe.
(*q*) Strabo, lib. xvii. p. 1136.

by

by multiplying its outlets, or by cutting canals, which gave free courſe to the waters (*r*). I have twice made the tour of the Delta, during the time of inundation, ſince I have been in Egypt, and have even croſſed it by the canal of Menouf. The river, though full to the brim in the great branches of Roſetta and Damietta, and thoſe which run through the interior parts of the country, only overflowed the land where it lay low, or where banks had been raiſed to ſtop its waters, and throw them over the rice fields. Thus, in the ſpace of 3284 years, the Delta has riſen fourteen cubits (*s*). Yet we muſt not believe the conjectures of thoſe travellers who ſuppoſe this iſland will become higher, and incapable of cultivation: being indebted, for its increaſe, to the mud which the courſe of the Nile carried with it, and annually depoſited, when it ceaſes to be inundated this effect muſt

(*r*) Strabo, lib. xvii, ſays the Bolbitine and Sebenitic channels of the Nile were both dug by the hand of man.

(*s*) To render this calculation exact, we ought to know whether the Greek, the Roman, and Arabian cubit were preciſely the ſame, or what were the variations it has undergone, among theſe different people; which would be a thing very difficult to demonſtrate. But this preciſion not being eſſential to my ſubject, I ſhall content myſelf with relating facts and the teſtimonies of authors.

likewiſe

likewiſe ceaſe. It has been demonſtrated that culture is not ſufficient to raiſe land.

The preſent poſition of the Delta is the beſt poſſible for agriculture. Waſhed on the eaſt and weſt by two rivers, which the Nile, in dividing, forms, as wide and deeper than the Loire, interſected by innumerable rivulets, it is one immenſe garden, the beds and compartments of which may all be watered. The Thebaïs is under water three months of the year; meanwhile the Delta poſſeſſes fields covered with rice, barley, vegetables, and winter fruits: nor does it now, as formerly, reſemble the Ægean ſea, with her Cyclades. As far as the eye is capable of ſeeing, rich crops cover its plains, groves of date, orange, and ſycamore trees, ſtreams, ever running, verdure, ever changing, and ever renewing, and abundance, which rejoices the heart and aſtoniſhes the imagination. Ceaſing to be overflowed, this iſland has a yearly gain of the three months during which the Thebaïs is inundated, for which reaſon it is the only part of Egypt where the ſame field yields a double crop of grain; the one of rice, the other of barley.

While it increaſed in height, you may well ſuppoſe, Sir, it augmented in length likewiſe;

to

to prove which, among various facts which hiſtory has preſerved, I ſhall ſelect only one *(t)*. During the reign of Pſammetichus, the Mileſians, with thirty ſhips, landed at the mouth of the Bolbitine branch, at preſent the branch of Roſetta, where they fortified themſelves, and built a city, which they called Metelis, now named Faoua, but which, in the Coptic vocabularies, is ſtill called Meſſil. This city, which was formerly a ſea-port, ſtands, at preſent, nine leagues from the ſhore; which ſpace the Delta has lengthened from the age of Pſammetichus to the preſent.

Homer, that ſublime painter of nations and countries, whoſe geographic details are the moſt precious remains of the kind tranſmitted to us by all antiquity, makes Menelaus, becalmed on the Egyptian ſhore, ſpeak thus. "In the "ſtormy ſea that bathes the coaſt of Egypt is "an iſland named Pharos, whoſe diſtance from "the ſhore is as far as a veſſel, impelled by a "favourable wind, may ſail in one day (*u*)."— And, again, Proteus, propheſying to Menelaus, thus ſpeaks. "Deſtiny forbids that thou

(*t*) Strabo, lib. xvii.

(*u*) Odyſſey, book iv.

"ſhouldeſt

"ſhouldeſt ſee thy friends, thy palace, and thy "native land, till thou haſt firſt returned to "where the Egyptus (*x*), Jove-born, rolls his "waters, and there haſt offered hecatombs to "the immortal gods.—He ſaid, and the beheſt "obliged me, with a broken heart, again to "traverſe that vaſt and ſtormy ſea which ſepa-"rates the Pharos from the Egyptian conti-"nent (*y*)."

Homer, who had travelled over Egypt (*z*), where he had learned that mythology from the prieſts of which he makes ſo beautiful uſe in his poems, deſcribes the iſland of Pharos, which now forms part of Alexandria, as being twenty leagues diſtant from the ſhore of Egypt, at leaſt; which opinion is accordant to that of the higheſt antiquity.

What immenſe revolutions have great rivers occaſioned on the ſurface of the globe! How do they inceſſantly repel the ſea, by accumulating ſand on ſand! How do they raiſe up iſlands, at their mouths, which, in time, become part of

(*x*) The Nile was called Egyptus until the time of Nileus, one of the ſucceſſors of Mendes, who, after many labours to confine and impede its ravages, named it after himſelf. Diod. Sic. lib. i.

(*y*) Odyſſey, book iv. (*z*) Diodorus Siculus.

the continent! Thus has the Nile formed almoſt all the Lower Egypt; and thus the Delta, which is ninety leagues in circumference, has riſen from its waters! Thus alſo has the Meander, inceſſantly driving back the waves of the Mediterranean, and by degrees filling up the bay in which it diſembogues itſelf, caſt the city of Miletus far within land, though it formerly was a famous ſea-port! Thus do the Tigris and Euphrates, deſcending from the Armenian mountains, ſweep down the ſands of Meſopotamia, and imperceptibly choak up the Perſian gulph.

You have now, Sir, a general idea of Egypt, and the principal changes which have happened there. I ſhall, therefore, proceed to be more circumſtantial, and you will then perhaps think my narrative more intereſting. Here, in the midſt of Alexandria, fixed with aſtoniſhment at beholding monuments which neither the ravages of man nor time could yet deſtroy, weeping over the ſenſeleſs remains of columns and obeliſks which adorned its public ſquares and temples, here will I write to you concerning the city of Alexander, the Alexandria of the Arabs, and the miſerable huts to which the Turks preſume to give that pompous title. Barbarians! throughout

out their vaſt empire, they have ſtifled arts, ſciences, cities, and kingdoms; and the name only remains of all thoſe famous works, which their ignorance has left to periſh, or their intolerable fanaticiſm has deſtroyed!

I have the honour to be, &c.

LETTER II.

Alexandria, ancient, middle, and modern, with its monuments, and three harbours, deſcribed: its ſucceſſive revolutions under the Ptolemies, Romans, Greeks, Arabs, and Ottomans.

To M. L. M.

Alexandria.

ALEXANDRIA, Sir, is well worthy your attention. The rank it once held among the moſt celebrated cities (*a*), the learned men to which it has given birth, and the remaining monuments which, though two thouſand years have paſſed away, ſtill atteſt its former glory, have a claim on your curioſity. To gratify this I have been three months examining the place where once it ſtood. By reading the Greek, Latin, and Arabic authors, I ſhall be enabled to diſcover it beneath its own rubbiſh; and, by comparing their writings with what I myſelf ſee, trace out its plan. Is it not a melan-

(*a*) Diodorus Siculus, who wrote at Rome under Auguſtus, calls Alexandria the firſt city of the world. Lib. xvii.

choly,

choly, a painful taſk, to ſeek a once famous city within its own walls?

Aſia Minor ſubdued, and the pride of Tyre humbled, Alexander marched for Egypt, then groaning under the Perſian yoke; he conquered it without a battle; the people, deſirous to free themſelves from their fetters, received him, like a deliverer, with open arms. To preſerve this conqueſt, ſo diſtant from his own kingdom, a fortreſs was neceſſary, which ſhould contain a port capable of harbouring a powerful navy. Alexander beſtowed on Egypt an advantage ſo precious; which till then it did not poſſeſs. The ſpace which lay between lake Mareotis, and the excellent harbour formed by the iſle of Pharos (*b*), he found proper for his purpoſe, and traced

(*b*) Homer, as I have already ſhown, deſcribes the iſle of Pharos as ſtanding at the diſtance of a day's navigation from the ſhore of Egypt, becauſe at that time the lake Mareotis joined the ſea, and formed a bay. During the five hundred years which elapſed between the time of Homer and the foundation of Alexandria, canals had been cut over Lower Egypt; and the lake Mareotis, into which the waters of the Thebaïs diſcharged themſelves, withdrew ſo far from the ſea as to form the ſlip of land on which Alexander built this city. When Cæſar, Strabo, Diodorus Siculus wrote, it bathed

traced the limits of a great city, to which he gave his name; then viſited the miracles of Upper Egypt, while the engineer Dinochares put his plan in execution. Alexander was gone almoſt a year, and, at his return, found Alexandria nearly finiſhed (*c*). He then peopled it with the inhabitants of the neighbouring cities, and purſued his conqueſts.

Alexandria was a league and a half in length, and one third as wide; ſo that its walls were about four leagues in circumference (*d*), and were waſhed by the lake Mareotis on the ſouth, and the Mediterranean on the north. The ſtreets, lengthways, ran ſtraight, and parallel to each other; thus giving a free paſſage to the north wind, which, alone, is healthy and temperate in Egypt. A ſtreet two thouſand feet

the walls. Under the Arabs it retired half a league; and, beneath the deſtructive empire of the Ottomans, it has diſappeared. A traveller who ſhould at preſent viſit Egypt, having read only Homer, would ſay with madame Dacier, Pope, and many others of the learned, that his deſcription of Pharos was merely the ſport of the imagination.

(*c*) Quintus Curtius, lib. iv. cap. 8.

(*d*) Quintus Curtius ſays they were 80 ſtadia, or 3 leagues one third. Pliny, 15 Roman miles, or 5 leagues. Strabo, 76 ſtadia, or 3 leagues and an eighth. Diodorus Siculus, 96 ſtadia, or 4 leagues.

wide


MEDITERRANEAN SEA
SEA
Rock called the Diamond
Road or inlet to the Haven now much above three or four fathom
in the Castle.
Mound on which formerly the Tower of Pharos in the road of the Haven
Mole of Pharos.
The great Harbour at present the new Port.
The Harbour Eunostus at present the Old Harbour.
Gate of the Harbour Kibotos.
Ground occupied by the Alexandrine of the Turks.
Gate of the Necropolis of the Arabs, with the two Towers.
Bab Rachid, Gate of Rosetta.
Bab Sedra.
Bab Elbahar, Gate of the Sea.
The Little Pharos.
The Promontory Lochias.
Gate of the Palace of the Ptolemies.
Cleopatra's Needles.
Column of Alexander Severus.
Canal from the Nile to Alexandria.
Lake of Lake Mareotis.
Cleopatra's Bath.
Scale of

wide began at the marine gate, and ended at the gate of Canopus, adorned by magnificent houſes, temples, and public edifices. Through this extent of proſpect the eye was never ſatiated with admiring the marble, the porphyry, and the obeliſks, which were deſtined hereafter to embelliſh Rome and Conſtantinople (*e*). This ſtreet, the fineſt the world ever ſaw, was croſſed by another of equal width (*f*), thus forming a ſquare, at the point of interſection, half a league in circumference, from the centre of which the two gates were ſeen, and veſſels under ſail, both to the north and ſouth.

A mole was thrown up, from the continent to the iſland of Pharos, of a mile long (*g*), which divided the harbour. The part north of the mole preſerved the name of the grand harbour, and a mound, carried from the iſland to the rock on which the Pharos ſtood, ſecured it from the weſt winds. The other harbour was called Eunoſtus, or the good return. At preſent, the firſt is called the New Port, the ſecond the

(*e*) It is well known the obeliſks which are at Rome were brought from Alexandria.

(*f*) Diodorus Siculus. Strabo, lib. xvii.

(*g*) This mole was named *Hepta Stadium*, becauſe it was ſeven ſtadia, or one mile long.

Old. There was a bridge of communication between the mole and the city, built on high columns, ſunk in the ſea, and leaving a free paſſage to veſſels. The palace began far beyond the promontory Lochias, and extended as far as the mound, occupying more than a fourth of the city (*h*). The Ptolemies all contributed to its magnificence; and within its walls were the Muſeum, that aſylum of the learned, groves, edifices, worthy royal majeſty, and a temple where the body of Alexander, in a golden coffin, had been depoſited (*i*). The infamous Seleucus Cybioſactes violated this tomb, carried off the golden coffin, and left one of glaſs in its ſtead. The iſland of Anti-Rhode ſtood in the grand harbour; it contained a theatre and a royal palace. In the harbour of Eunoſtus was another harbour, or dock, dug by the hand of man, named *Kibotos* (*k*), which communicated with the lake Mareotis by a canal. Between this canal and the palace ſtood the admirable temple

(*h*) Strabo, lib. xvii, ſays it occupied a third.

(*i*) Perdiccas undertook to convey the body of Alexander to the temple of Jupiter Ammon, as he had commanded in his will; but Ptolemy, the ſon of Lagus, having carried it off, depoſited it in the palace of Alexandria.

(*k*) *Kibotos*, the harbour of the Ark,

of

of Serapis (*l*); that of Neptune was built near the grand ſquare, where the market was kept. Alexandria extended itſelf ſtill farther on the ſouthern borders of the lake, and on its eaſtern ſide was the gymnaſium, with porticos more than ſix hundred feet long, reſting on ſeveral rows of marble columns. Without the gate of Canopus was a ſpacious circus, for chariot races; and, beyond, the ſuburbs of Nicopolis ſpread along the ſea-ſhore, like another Alexandria. A ſuperb amphitheatre was built here, with a ſtadium, for the celebration of the Quinquennalia (*m*). Such is the deſcription which the ancients, and particularly Strabo, have left us of Alexandria; a city built three hundred and thirty-three years before Chriſt, and ſucceſſively ſubject to the Ptolemies, Romans, and the Greek emperors (*n*). About the middle of the ſixth century, Amrou Ebn'el Aas, the general of Omar, carried it by aſſault, after a fourteen months' ſiege, which coſt him twenty-three

(*l*) Strabo, lib. xvii.

(*m*) Games celebrated once in five years.

(*n*) The tenth year of the Hegira, and A. D. 651, was, according to Abulfeda, the year 994 after its foundation. Abulfeda uſes the word Era, which, as I have ſaid in the life of Mahomet, is derived from Arkha, which in Arabic is ſynonymous to epocha.

thouſand

thouſand men. Heraclius, emperor of Conſtantinople, did not ſend a ſingle veſſel to its aid. There are few examples in hiſtory of a prince like this, who diſcovered activity in the firſt year of his reign, ſlumbered long afterwards in effeminate idleneſs, and ſuddenly rouſing at the fame of the conqueſts of Coſroès, the ſcourge of the Eaſt, put himſelf at the head of his armies, ſhowed himſelf a great commander the firſt campaign, ravaged Perſia during ſeven years, re-entered his capital loaded with laurels, then, turning theologian on the throne, loſt his energy, and ſpent the reſt of his life in diſputing on monotheliſm, while the Arabs deprived him of the fineſt provinces of his empire. Deaf to the cries of the wretched citizens of Alexandria, as he had been to thoſe of Jeruſalem (*o*), who had defended themſelves for two years, he ſuffered them to fall before the indefatigable and fortunate Amrou; their brave warriors all periſhing ſword in hand.

(*o*) Omar led the force of Arabia againſt Jeruſalem, which its inhabitants defended with admirable conſtancy, and ſeveral times ſent to conjure Heraclius to grant them ſuccour; but, their prayers being fruitleſs, they were obliged to yield after a two years' ſiege, without having obtained a ſingle ſoldier from the emperor, who ſacrificed his time and treaſures to eſtabliſh a new ſect.

Aſſo-

Aſtoniſhed at his victory, the conqueror wrote to the caliph — "I have taken the city of the "weſt, the extent of which is immenſe, and its "miracles too numerous for me to deſcribe. It "contains four thouſand baths, twelve thouſand "venders of vegetables, four thouſand Jews, "who pay tribute, four thouſand comedians, "&c (*p*)."

The library, in which the careful Ptolemies had aſſembled more than four hundred thouſand manuſcripts, drew the victor's attention, who wrote to the caliph for orders. "Burn them," replied the ferocious Omar: "if they contain "only what is in the Koran they are uſeleſs; "and dangerous if any thing more." Barbarous ſentence, which reduced to aſhes the greateſt part of the learned labours of antiquity! Of what knowledge, what arts, what immortal works, did not this fatal conflagration deprive the world! We ought, perhaps, to date that ignorance, which ſpread a veil over countries that firſt gave birth to ſcience from this fatal period. Let us but ſuppoſe three-fourths of the works Europe poſſeſſes ſuddenly annihilated, the art of printing unknown, and an illiterate people

(*p*) Elmacin, life of Omar, p. 30.

become

become maſters of that fine quarter of the globe, and we can eaſily imagine it again fallen into that barbariſm which it has been the labour of ſo many ages to eradicate. Such was the fate of the Eaſt!

Thus ſubjected to the Arabs, Alexandria gradually declined: the diſtance of the caliphs of Bagdad prevented their affording any powerful ſupport to commerce and arts, and population daily diminiſhed; thus, in the year 875 (*q*), the circumference of the city was reduced one half, the ancient walls were demoliſhed, and thoſe built which ſtill remain. Their ſolidity, thickneſs, and the hundred towers by which they were flanked, have preſerved them againſt the efforts of man, and the ravages of time. This may be called the Alexandria of the Arabs, which continued flouriſhing in the thirteenth century (*r*). The equal interſection of its ſtreets made it reſemble a checker; part of its ſquares and public buildings were preſerved;

(*q*) This happened under the reign of Elmetouakkel, the tenth caliph of the Abaſſides, and the thirty-firſt from Mahomet. Elmacin. *Ebn Toulon*, then governor of Egypt, and who thought of rendering himſelf independent, built theſe walls.

(*r*) Abulfeda, Geographical Deſcription of Egypt.

its

its commerce extended from Spain to India; its canals were kept in repair, and its merchandiſe ſent into Upper Egypt, by the lake Mareotis, and into the Delta, by the canal of Faoua (*s*). The Pharos, built by Soſtrates of Cnidus, containing ſeveral ſtories, and ſurrounded by galleries ſupported by marble columns, ſtill remained. This miraculous tower, as Cæſar calls it, was near four hundred feet high; on its ſummit was a vaſt mirror of poliſhed ſteel (*t*), ſo diſpoſed as to preſent the image of diſtant veſſels before they were viſible to the eye. This admirable tower ſerved as a ſignal to ſhipping; it was lighted up, during night, to inform mariners of their approach to the Egyptian coaſt, which is ſo low that there is great danger of running a-ground before it can be ſeen. Alexandria, in its decline, ſtill preſerved an air of grandeur and magnificence which excited admiration.

The Turks ſeized on Egypt in the fifteenth

(*s*) It was built under Ptolemy Philadelphus.

(*t*) Abulfeda ſpeaks of this mirror, mentioned by ſeveral Arabian authors, in his deſcription of Egypt, and ſays, it was deſtroyed by the arts of the Chriſtians, under the reign of Oualid, ſon of Abd el Melec.

century,

century (*u*), and this put a period to its glory. At that time grammar, aſtronomy, geometry, and poetry, were cultivated there; but the iron rod of the Pachas ſoon drove away theſe remains of the fine arts; a prohibition to export the corn of the Thebaïs gave a mortal blow to agriculture; the canals dried up, commerce languiſhed, and the Alexandria of the Arabs was ſo wholly depopulated that not a ſingle inhabitant remained; the grand buildings they had abandoned fell to ruin, no one daring to repair them, under a government that made wealth a crime, and poor huts were built on the ſea-ſhore. The Pharos, which had been reckoned among the ſeven wonders of the world, was deſtroyed, and in its ſtead a ſquare caſtle built, without taſte or ornament, and incapable of ſuſtaining the fire of a ſingle veſſel of the line. At preſent, in a ſpace of two leagues, walled round, nothing is to be ſeen but marble columns, lying in the duſt, and ſawed in pieces, for the Turks make mill-ſtones of them, or ſtanding erect, firm and re-

(*u*) Sultan Selim conquered Egypt in 1517, and the firſt act of this barbarous victor was to hang Thomanbey, the laſt king of the Mamlukes, whoſe government had ſubſiſted near three hundred years, under the gate named Bab Zouila.

ſiſtleſs by their enormous weight, together with the remains of pilaſters, capitals, obeliſks, and mountains of ruins, heaped on each other! Who, at beholding ſuch precious rubbiſh, and recollecting the famous monuments of which they were once a part, can, in the affliction of his ſoul, refrain from weeping over them?

Modern Alexandria is a place of ſmall extent, ſcarcely containing ſix thouſand inhabitants (*x*), but exceedingly commercial, which advantage it owes to its ſituation. It is built on the ground over which formerly the water of the grand harbour flowed, but which the retiring ſea has now left dry. The mole, which was carried to the iſle of Pharos, is now enlarged and become part of the continent; and the iſland of Anti-Rhode is the centre of the new town; it is known by an eminence, covered with ruins. The harbour of Kibotos is dry, and the canal that ran into it, from the lake Mareotis, has diſappeared; the very lake itſelf, on the borders of which the papyrus and date-tree abounded, no longer exiſts; the Turks hav-

(*x*) Ancient Alexandria contained 300,000 free inhabitants in the time of Auguſtus; a double number of ſlaves may at leaſt be added, and the amount will be 900,000. How prodigious the difference!

ing

ing neglected to repair the canals, through which the waters of the Nile flowed into it. Belon, a very accurate obſerver, who travelled Egypt ſome years after the Ottoman conqueſt, affirms that, in his time, the lake Mareotis was but half a league diſtant from the walls of Alexandria, and that it was ſurrounded by foreſts of palm-trees (*y*). The ſands of Lybia are, now, where once theſe waters were. To the deſtructive government of the Turks muſt we attribute theſe deplorable changes.

The canal of Faoua, the only one which ſtill runs to Alexandria, and without which it could no longer be a town, ſince it has not a drop of ſoft water, is half filled up with mud and ſand. Under the government of the Romans, and even of the Arabs, it was navigable all the year, and fertiliſed the plains it traverſed; its banks were ſhaded by date-trees, covered by vines, and embelliſhed by pleaſure houſes (*z*). The ſtream only

(*y*) Belon, Deſcription of Alexandria. This writer travelled in Egypt fifteen years after the conqueſt of Selim, about 250 years ago.

(*z*) The following paſſage of Abulfeda will confirm what I have ſaid. "No proſpect can be more agreeable than that "of the canal of Alexandria: gardens, groves, and an eter-"nal

only flows now about the end of Auguſt, and there is ſcarcely ſufficient time to fill the reſervoirs and ciſterns of the town; the lands it once made fruitful are now become deſerts, and the groves and gardens, around Alexandria, have diſappeared, with the ſtreams that watered them; a few trees only are ſeen without the walls, thinly ſcattered, of ſycamore, fig, the fruit of which is delicious, dates, the caper ſhrub, and the ſouda, or kali, which ſpread a partial ver-

" nal verdure, adorn its banks; as Dafard el Hadad thus has " deſcribed them, in theſe beautiful verſes.

" How pleaſant are the banks of the canal of Alexandria! " When the eye ſurveys them, the heart is rejoiced! The " gliding boatman, beholding its bowers, beholds canopies " ever verdant; the lovely Aquilon breathes cooling freſh- " neſs, while he ſportful ripples up the ſurface of its waters; " the ample date, whoſe flexible head reclines like a ſleeping " beauty, is crowned with pendent fruit."

Oua khalig Eleſcanderié ellati iatiha men el Nil men ahſan el mentezhat laenno daiak Makdar el Janebin, bel Beſatin oua ſih iecoul el Hadad:

Ou aſhié ahadet l'ainak menzara
Ja eſſerour bo le calbak ou afda
Roud le mekhadder cladar oua gedaoual
Nakaſhet aleih id ech chemal mebareda
Oua-l-Nakhl Kelrhid el haſſan tezainet
Oua lebes men atmarhen calaïda.

Abulfeda, Deſcription of Egypt.

dure over burning ſands, the ſight of which is inſupportable.

Yet are not all tokens of the ancient magnificence of Alexandria effaced; its ciſterns, vaulted with great art, which were built under all parts of the city, and its numerous aqueducts, are almoſt entire, though they have remained two thouſand years. Towards the eaſtern part of the palace are the two obeliſks, vulgarly called Cleopatra's needles (*a*), of Thebaian ſtone, and containing numerous hieroglyphics: one is thrown down, broken, and covered with ſand; the other ſtill reſts on its pedeſtal; each, cut from one ſingle ſtone, is about ſixty feet high, and ſeven ſquare, at the baſe. Near the gate of Roſetta are five marble columns, in the place where the porticos of the gymnaſium ſtood; the remainder of the colonnade, the ranges of which, a hundred years ago, might be traced (*b*), has been deſtroyed by the barbariſm of the Turks.

(*a*) Pococke ſuppoſes they ſtood before the Temple of Neptune: but this temple was built near the harbour of Eunoſtus, and the obeliſks are half a league farther towards the promontory Lochias; where, according to Strabo, the palace was built.

(*b*) Maillet, Deſcription of Egypt.

A column

A column of red granite, ſtanding a quarter of a league from the ſouth gate, particularly attracts the attention of travellers; the capital is Corinthian, with undented, ſmooth, palm-leaves; it is nine feet high; the ſhaft and the upper torus of the baſe are one ſingle block ninety feet long, and nine in diameter; the baſe is about fifteen feet ſquare. This block of marble, ſixty feet in circumference, reſts on two layers of ſtone, held together by lead; which could not prevent the Arabs from forcing ſeveral of them out, in ſearch of an imaginary treaſure. The whole column is a hundred and fourteen feet high, and ſtill preſerves a perfect poliſh, except a little chipped toward the eaſt. Nothing can equal its majeſty! At a diſtance, it is ſeen predominant over the city; and, at ſea, ſerves as a ſignal for mariners: near, it creates aſtoniſhment, mingled with awe: the ſpectator is never weary of admiring the beauty of the capital, the length of the ſhaft, or the grand ſimplicity of the pedeſtal; and I am perſuaded, were this column tranſported and placed before the palace of our kings, all Europe would come and pay their tribute of admiration, as to the moſt magnificent monument on earth!

Travellers, and men of literature, have made

many fruitleſs attempts to diſcover to what prince it was dedicated: the moſt intelligent have thought it could not be in honour of Pompey, ſince Strabo and Diodorus Siculus have not mentioned it; they therefore remained in doubt, from which Abulfeda, in my opinion, might have relieved them. He calls it the column of Severus (*c*); and hiſtory informs us this emperor viſited Egypt (*d*), appointed a court of juſtice in the city of Alexandria, and deſerved well of its inhabitants. This column was a mark of their gratitude; the Greek inſcription, half effaced, but viſible on the weſtern ſide, when the ſun ſhines on it, was no doubt legible in the time of Abulfeda, and contained the name of Severus. Neither is this the ſole monument

(*c*) Oua Eſcanderié ala ſhat bahr elroum, oua beha elmenarat el maſhhoura, oua beha Aamoud Severi.

Alexandria is built on the ſea-ſhore, and poſſeſſes a famous Pharos, and the column of Severus. Abulfeda, Deſcription of Egypt.

(*d*) The emperor Severus came to the city of Alexandria, and granted the people a ſenate, which, till then, had been under the authority of a ſingle Roman magiſtrate, having no national council, but, as in the time of the Ptolemies, the will of the prince was then law. The benefactions of Severus did not end here, for he changed ſeveral laws in their favour. Spartianus, Vita Severi, cap. 17.

erected

erected to him by the gratitude of the people of Alexandria; in the midſt of the ruins of Antinoë, built by Adrian, is a magnificent column, the inſcription on which ſtill ſubſiſts, dedicated to Alexander Severus. Half a league ſouth of the city is the deſcent into the catacombs, the ancient aſylum of the dead. Winding alleys lead to the ſubterranean caverns where they were depoſited. The ſuburb of Necropolis (*e*) extended thus far. Advancing toward the ſea, we come to a large baſon, hewn in the rock which ſtands on the ſhore; two handſome apartments have been cut in the ſides of the baſon, with banks croſſing them; into theſe the ſea-water runs, as clear and tranſparent as cryſtal, through a canal, dug with angular turnings to retain the ſand; and here I bathed. When ſeated on the rocky bank, the water riſes ſomewhat above the middle; the feet reſt on a ſoft fine ſand; the waves are heard, roaring againſt the rock, and foaming through the canal; they enter, raiſe you up, retire, and, thus paſſing and repaſſing, bring, with water continually freſh, a coolneſs moſt delicious under a ſky ſo ſultry. This is

(*e*) The city of the dead, where there are gardens, temples, and ſtately mauſoleums.

vulgarly called Cleopatra's bath, and there are ruins which denote it was formerly embelliſhed.

I muſt not quit Alexandria, Sir, without bringing ſome of thoſe memorable things to recollection which have happened in this city. Imagine you behold yonder mount, near which Cæſar, firing the arſenal of the Alexandrians, conſumed a part of the Ptolemæan library. At the entrance of this port, repulſed by his enemies, he threw himſelf, armed, into the waves; and, ever maſter of himſelf, foreſeeing the numbers of the flying would preſently ſink his ſhip, ſwam to one more diſtant: his preſence of mind ſaved him, for his veſſel and all on board were ſwallowed up. Yonder Cleopatra, famous for her beauty, her talents, and arts, enſnared the hero, awhile reſtrained his ever reſtleſs ambition, and, lulling him in the boſom of voluptuouſneſs, led him in her train, up the Nile, at the very moment he ought to have ſet ſail for Rome, the gates of which were in danger of being for ever ſhut upon him. Beſide theſe columns, melancholy mementos of the gymnaſium, the haughty queen of Egypt, ſeated on a throne of gold, received, in the preſence of the wondering world, the title of wife to Antony, who there ſacrificed fame to love. Loſt in pleaſures,

ſures, having ſuffered the moment of conqueſt to eſcape, ſhe cauſed herſelf to be bit by an aſpic, he fell upon his ſword; and thus, in death, afforded a memorable example to poſterity.

Where yonder rubbiſh lies, the muſeum ſtood, once the aſylum of ſciences. Appian, Herodian, Euclid, Origen, Philo, and a multitude of other learned men, cultivated them there. Ignorance and barbariſm have now overwhelmed the country of the fine arts, which nothing but ſome prodigious revolution can ever reſtore.

This is a long letter, Sir; I ſhall therefore forbear to add obſervations on the manners and trade of the people of Alexandria: theſe will find a place hereafter, and I haſten to quit a city where one exiſts in the midſt of ruins, where every object inſpires grief, where the inhabitants are a mixture of Moors and Turks whoſe crimes have expelled them from their country, where the Bedouin Arabs come and rob you in open day, and where, in fine, nature, dead eleven months of the year, decks herſelf in a momentary verdure only to inſpire laſting regret!

I have the honour to be, &c.

LETTER III.

The route from Alexandria to Roſetta, acroſs the deſert; with the deſcription of Alboukir, formerly Canopus; the famous temple of Serapis; the feſtivals held there; the dangers of the deſert, and the delightful environs of Roſetta.

To M. L. M.

Roſetta.

TRAVELLERS, Sir, who go from Alexandria to Roſetta by land, leave the canal of Faoua on the right, paſs near the ruins of the grand circus, and, on the left, meet with the remains of Nicopolis, a ſuburb which was embelliſhed by Auguſtus, after his victory over Antony. Here, for the ſpace of two leagues, nothing is to be ſeen but heaps of rubbiſh, burying the precious remains of antiquity. Coaſting, afterwards, beſide the ſea, the proſpect extends on one hand over waves, and on the other over ſandy fields, of melancholy and arid uniformity, which is here

here and there interrupted by date-trees. The Bedouin Arabs bring their flocks to feed here, during winter, and in ſummer, gather ſouda (*f*) in heaps, burn it, and ſell the aſhes to the inhabitants of Alexandria, who export it into Syria, and the iſle of Crete, where it is uſed in making ſoap. Theſe wandering Arabs, on the firſt tidings of a revolution in Egypt, mount their horſes, infeſt the high roads, and plunder travellers. Six leagues from Alexandria is the *Madia* (*g*), where there is a ferry, at the farther end of the canal of Canopus, which, taking its departure from Faoua, falls into the lake Behera. This lake is ſeven leagues in circumference, and empties itſelf into the ſea, near Alboukir (*h*), which ſmall town is the ancient Canopus. Its diſtance, ſix leagues from Pharos, and its ſituation, on the ſea-ſhore, perfectly agree with the deſcription the ancients have given us of Canopus. Pliny, who had collected the authorities of antiquity, ſays, it was formerly an iſland,

(*f*) Kali, fouda, or glaſs-wort, is a creeping plant which grows in the ſands.

(*g*) *Madia*, in Arabic, ſignifies the paſſage over a lake, or river.

(*h*) This place is called Bekier, by mariners.

which

which the aſpect of the place makes credible; the land lies ſo low, in the neighbourhood, that the ſea covered it, in part, in Strabo's time (*i*). The city, built on a rock, which forms an excellent road for ſhipping, was ſecure from inundation.

Canopus was named after the pilot of Menelaus, who died there (*k*); his tomb was to be ſeen in the age when S. Epiphanius wrote. The pleaſantneſs of its ſituation, its temple of Serapis, and the cunning of its prieſts, rendered it one of the moſt famous places of pilgrimage in Egypt; multitudes came there from the moſt diſtant provinces, and eſpecially from Alexandria. Licentiouſneſs reigned during theſe feſtivals; and pleaſure, more than religion, led the pretended worſhippers of their God thither. The prieſts were not leſs eminent as phyſicians than as interpreters of the oracle; ſkilful in reſtoring their exhauſted patients by perfumed baths, in renovating an injured ſtomach by nutritive and ſucculent food mingled with ſpices, and in heating their imaginations by voluptuous

(*i*) Strabo, lib. xvii.

(*k*) Strabo, lib. xvii. Diodorus Siculus, S. Epiphanius, lib. iv. cap. 3. Theſe authors confirm the opinion of Homer, who makes Menelaus land in Egypt. Odyſſey, lib. iv.

pictures,'

pictures, they ſucceeded in reanimating the half loſt ſenſes. Their cures, all attributed to Serapis, were regiſtered, and this dazzled the people and increaſed their celebrity. Never had Divinity more adorers; never had prieſts more offerings (*l*). Strabo affirms, the canal, between Alexandria and Canopus, was loaded, night and day, with boats, containing pilgrims whoſe ſongs and dances ſeemed inſpired by libidinous diſorder and frantic joy. This canal is at preſent dry, during one part of the year; and the ruinous town conſiſts only of huts, and

(*l*) Canopus contains a temple, dedicated to Serapis, where diſtinct adoration is paid to this God, in whom the very beſt people have faith.—Some of the prieſts are employed in writing the miraculous cures performed there; others the oracles, which are there pronounced; but the thing moſt aſtoniſhing is to ſee the prodigious concourſe of people, who come, from all parts, to the feaſts of Serapis, down the canal of Alexandria, which is, day and night, covered with boats, full of men and women, who ſing and dance with extreme licentiouſneſs. Strabo, lib. xvii.

Theſe pilgrimages, which exiſted in the time of Herodotus, are ſtill continued; the Pagans went to the temple of Serapis, the Turks go to the tombs of their ſantons, and the Copts to the churches of their ſaints; all abandon themſelves to mirth, nor has Turkiſh gravity aboliſhed the wanton ſongs and dances which ſeem to have originated with the Egyptians.

a caſtle,

a caſtle, provided with a few pieces of artillery, to defend the road.

Paſſing the ferry, Madia, we come to a caravanſary, the ſole aſylum, againſt theſe burning heats, to be met with during a journey of fourteen leagues. Beyond lies an extenſive, barren plain, where neither verdure, tree, nor ſhrub, are ſeen; the eyes are half blinded by a torrent of light; the ſkin parched by the fiery ſun. Eleven columns, erected at proper intervals, direct the traveller acroſs the deſert, where the wind agitates the ſand-hills till they reſemble the waves of the ſea. Woe be to the man who, in the midſt of this deſert, is overtaken by the noon-day whirlwind! If he has not a tent to ſhelter himſelf, he is overwhelmed in drifts of burning duſt; which, filling his eyes and mouth, deprive him of breath and life. The wiſeſt way is to make this journey by night; and then, at break of day, the traveller diſcovers the palm and ſycamore-trees (*m*) which adorn the

(*m*) The Egyptian ſycamore produces a fig, which grows on the trunk of the tree, and not at the end of the branches, and which, though ſomewhat dry, is eaten. This tree becomes exceedingly large, and tufted; it ſeldom grows ſtraight,

the banks of the Nile, and preſently arrives at Roſetta, bathed in ſweat and dew.

When, after a long abode in the centre of ruins, and a moſt fatiguing journey, one finds one's ſelf in the midſt of a pleaſant city, ſurrounded with groves and verdure, how does the ſoul dilate! How is it diſpoſed to enjoy all the beauties of nature! Such is the traveller who, quitting Alexandria, comes to inhabit Roſetta: eſcaped all the horrors of the deſert, he thinks himſelf tranſported into another Eden, where every object is the ſymbol of abundance.

Roſetta, called Raſchid by the Arabs, ſtands on the ancient Bolbitine branch, to which it has given its name. It was founded in the eighth century (*n*); the increaſing ſand-banks of the Nile

ſtraight, but is generally bent, and twiſted; its branches extending very far horizontally, afford excellent ſhelter; its leaves are divided, and its wood, impregnated with bitter juice, is not ſubject to be worm-eaten. The ſycamore grows ſeveral ages.

(*n*) Neither Father Sicard, Pococke, Niebuhr, nor any other traveller have fixed the time of the foundation of Roſetta. Elmacin, p. 152, informs us it was built during the reign of Elmetouakkel, caliph of Bagdad, about the year 870, and under the pontificate of Coſmar, patriarch of the Jacobines at Alexandria. M. Maillet allows it to have been

built

Nile no longer permitting ſhips to ſail as far as Faoua, this new city was built at, though now two leagues diſtant from, the mouth of the river. Abulfeda informs us it was an inconſiderable place in the thirteenth century (*o*), nor had it greatly increaſed two hundred years afterwards; but, when the Ottomans added Egypt to their conqueſts, they neglected to repair the canals; and, that of Faoua ceaſing to be navigable, Roſetta became the ſtore-houſe of the merchandiſe of Alexandria and Cairo. Trade ſoon made it flouriſh, and it is now one of the pleaſanteſt towns in Egypt. It ſpreads along the weſtern bank of the Nile, and is nearly a league in length, and one fourth as wide. No remarkable ſquare is ſeen here; no ſtreet perfectly ſtraight; but the houſes, built with terraces, ſtanding aſunder, and kept in good repair, have a pleaſing air of neatneſs and elegance. With-

built only a hundred years, and thinks it replaces Canopus. This is an error. Proſper Alpinus has committed the ſame fault.

(*o*) *Raſchid balidé ala garbi el Nil el garbi and meſabbo fil bahr.* Roſetta is a ſmall city, built on the weſtern bank of the weſtern branch of the Nile, near its mouth.

Belon, who travelled in Egypt in 1530, ſays Roſetta was ſmaller than Faoua: at preſent it is one half larger than that city.

in,

in, they contain vaſt apartments, where the air has free circulation through a great number of windows, kept always open: the lattices and tranſparent blinds break the ſun's rays, and thus render the light mild, and temper the exceſs of the heat. The only remarkable public edifices are the moſques, the lofty minarets of which are built in a light, bold ſtyle, and produce a pictureſque effect, in a town where the roofs are all flat, by throwing variety into the picture. Moſt of the houſes have a proſpect of the Nile and the Delta; a truly magnificent one! Veſſels and boats, ſome rowing, ſome under ſail, continually cover the river; while the tumult of the port, the mirth of the mariners, and their noiſy muſic, preſent a ſcene ever moving, ever alive. The Delta, that immenſe garden, where the exhauſtleſs earth is never weary of producing, affords an eternal view of harveſts, vegetables, flowers, and fruits, in ſucceſſion; the abundant variety of which, at once, gladdens the eyes and the heart. Various ſpecies of cucumbers, delicious melons, the fig, the orange, the banana, the pomegranate, all grow here, all have here an exquiſite flavour. Yet how much might culture increaſe their excellence, did the Egyptians underſtand engrafting.

North

North of the city are gardens, where citron, orange, date, and ſycamore-trees are promiſcuouſly planted; though this diſorder is negligent, the mingling of the trees, and the arbours they form, impenetrable to the ſun's rays, together with the flowers ſcattered among them, render theſe groves moſt enchanting.

When the atmoſphere is all on fire, when the big moiſture courſes down every member, when gaſping man pants after cool air, as the ſick after health, with what ecſtacy does he go and reſpire under theſe bowers, and beſide the rivulet by which they are watered! There the Turk, with his long jaſmine pipe wrought with amber, imagines himſelf tranſported into the garden of delight which Mahomet promiſed: thoughtleſs, in tranquil apathy, he ſmokes the ſun down, void of deſire, void of ambition; his calm paſſions never caſt one curious look towards futurity: that reſtleſs activity by which we are tormented, and which is the ſoul of all our knowledge, of all our works, is to him unknown; content with what he poſſeſſes, he neither invents nor brings the inventions of others to perfection: his life, to us, ſeems a long ſlumber; ours, to him, one continual ſtate of intoxication; but, while we are ever purſuing happineſs

happineſs which ever eludes our graſp, he peaceably enjoys the good that nature gives, and each day brings, without troubling himſelf concerning the morrow.

Here, in theſe gardens, the young Georgians, ſold into ſlavery by barbarous parents, quit, with the veil which covers them, that decency they obſerve in public. Freed here from all conſtraint, they cauſe laſcivious dances to be performed in their preſence, ſing tender ſongs, and relate tales, and romances, which preſent an undiſguiſed picture of their manners and pleaſures. Born in a temperate climate, they receive from nature a ſoul of energy, and tumultuous paſſions; brought afterwards into Egypt, the fire of the atmoſphere, the perfume of the orange-flower, and the emanations of aromatic plants, voluptuouſly invade every ſenſe: then does one ſole care employ, one ſole deſire torment, them; one only predominant want is felt; the violence of which is increaſed by the reſtraint under which they are kept.

The principal wealth of Roſetta flows from commerce. The tranſportation of foreign merchandiſe to Cairo, and of the productions of Egypt to the port of Alexandria, gives employment to a great number of mariners. Their veſ-

ſels are called ſcherms (*p*); a light kind of boats, with lateen-ſails, and which, having no deck, are very hazardous; a guſt of wind, coming unexpectedly, turns them on their ſide, and they founder. The *Bogaz* (*q*), for ſo they call the bar at the mouth of the Nile, is a dangerous ſhoal for them; the waters here drive and ſtruggle to find paſſage into the ſea, and, when the wind freſhens, the waves run mountain-high, forming whirlpools, which ingulf veſſels. The Bogaz is ſhallow, and, in the extent of a league, there is ſeldom more than a paſſage of ſome few fathoms for the veſſels, which is continually changing: a boatman, or pilot, keeps ſounding, night and day, to direct the mariners what courſe they muſt ſteer, who often are incapable, with all their art, to cope with the winds and waves; they miſs the paſſage, get on a ſand-bank, and, in a few minutes, all is ſwallowed up in a vortex of water and mud. Numerous ſhipwrecks happen every year; there have been ſeveral ſince I have been here. A large boat,

(*p*) *Scherm* expreſſes the ſwiftneſs with which theſe ſmall veſſels ſkim the waves; the ſailors of Provence call them, by corruption, germe.

(*q*) The word *Bogaz* is deſcriptive of the agitation of the waves.

richly

richly laden, periſhed yeſterday on the Bogaz; the paſſengers leapt into the water; an old and feeble man clung to the maſt, and diſappeared with it; three young girls, after long ſtruggling with the waves and current, were ſwallowed up; two robuſt ſailors got aſhore; a woman of thirty, who had tied a child ſhe ſuckled round her with her ſaſh, ſwam vigorouſly; the deſire of ſaving her infant gave her fortitude; yet, after an hour's contention againſt the violence of the ſea, this affectionate mother was on the point of periſhing, the victim of maternal love; the boatmen, however, perceived her, plunged into the Nile and haſtened to her aſſiſtance; ſpent with fatigue, ſhe ſcarcely could keep herſelf above water; but they ſwam beſide, ſupported, and happily brought her on ſhore. Theſe melancholy ſcenes are frequently renewed.

The bar of the Nile is totally cloſed, two months in the year, and the commerce of Alexandria interrupted; but, were it to become totally impaſſable, and were all the ſhipping of Egypt to be ſwallowed up, the Ottoman government would not remove one foot of earth from the canal of Faoua, to render it navigable. Committed to their care, every thing periſhes, nothing is repaired.

I have many more things, Sir, to tell you concerning Roſetta; but, as I ſhall prolong my ſtay in this city, I ſhall wait till obſervation, and the ſociety of its inhabitants, ſhall have ſtill better enabled me to execute my taſk.

I have the honour to be, &c.

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LETTER IV.

Further remarks on Roſetta, its foundation, commerce, inhabitants, and gardens; with an account of the proceſſion of the Pſylli, or ſerpent-eaters.

To M. L. M.

Roſetta.

ROSETTA, Sir, may well excite the curioſity of a European, who ſees ſo many new objects that he imagines himſelf tranſported into another world: men and nature, all he beholds is changed. A dead ſilence reigns throughout the city, uninterrupted by the noiſe of carriages; camels are the carriers here; nothing alters or diſturbs the grave walk of the inhabitants: their long garments float down to their heels; the head is loaded with a heavy turban, or encircled by a ſhawl (*r*); they cut their hair off, and let their beards grow. Saſhes are common to both

(*r*) They wind the ſhawl, ſometimes made of ſilk, and ſometimes of wool, in a long piece, round the head.

ſexes; the citizen is armed with a knife, the ſoldier with a ſabre and two piſtols. The women of low rank, whoſe clothing conſiſts of an ample blue ſhift, and long drawers, cover their faces with a bit of cloth, having holes oppoſite the eyes; the rich wear a large white veil, with a black ſilk mantle, enveloping the body like a domino, ſo that one would think them in maſquerade. A ſtranger ſcarcely dares look at them, to ſpeak would be a crime; but theſe maſks are liberal of their ſigns and oglings; and, as this is the only language they are permitted to uſe in public, it is more expreſſive, more copious, and in much higher perfection than in Europe: every thing is ſaid, every thing is wonderfully well underſtood, without opening the lips.

The country is as different from the neighbourhood of Paris as is Roſetta from a town in France. An immenſe flat, without hill or mountain, interſected by innumerable canals; corn-fields; branching ſycamores, whoſe unperiſhable wood preſerves the mud-wall hut into which the huſbandman retires during winter, for he ſleeps under the ſhade in ſummer; date-trees in cluſters, or ſcattered over the plain,

the

the profuſe fruit of which is nutritive, ſweet, and ſalutary; the caſſia, with flexible branches, decked in yellow flowers, and bearing a pod well known in pharmacy (*s*); orange and citron-trees unmutilated by the pruning knife, whoſe projecting odoriferous boughs form arbours impenetrable by the ſun's rays; ſuch, Sir, are the objects of the Delta, and ſuch its principal trees and ſhrubs. Winter does not rob them of their foliage, they are apparelled all the year as if every month were May.

The land is a black ſoil, the fertility of which ſeems inexhauſtible; ever productive and never fallow. The huſbandmen have been preparing the rice grounds. Oxen, blindfolded, turn a machine, with buckets which empty water into a baſon, whence it is diffuſed over the fields, where it is left to remain a week: when the earth is thoroughly ſoaked, men, women, and children, naked up to the waiſt, walk and ſink deep into the mud, and eaſily free the land from the old roots. This work done, rice of a foot

(*s*) This pod reſembles a long, ſmall cucumber, and contains the caſſia uſed in pharmacy; the caſſia of Egypt is much preferable to that of America, but, being dearer, is neglected by the druggiſts. The Egyptians uſe the caſſia flower as a laxative.

high is tranſplanted into the rice-bed (*t*), where, watered every day, its rapid growth is aſtoniſhing. The grounds, on the banks of the Nile, and the canals, are planted about the end of July, and reaped in November; the ſheaves are ſpread on the floor; a kind of low cart, with cutting wheels, drawn by two oxen, is driven, by a man ſeated on it, over the rice, and the ſtraw is ſeparated from the grain, which is afterwards winnowed; it is next carried to granaries, where there is a mill that frees it from the huſk; and, thus prepared, it is mixed with ſalt, and incloſed in *couffes* (*u*), made from the leaves of the date-tree.

The rice grown round Roſetta is known by the name *Sultani*, and it is a miſtake to ſuppoſe this rice is ever ſent to Marſeilles; being appropriated to the uſe and conſumption of Conſtantinople, there are very rigorous laws which prohibit its exportation. The merchants of Provence take in their cargoes at Damietta.

As ſoon as the rice is down, the ſtubble is torn up, the land ſlightly dreſſed, and barley is

(*t*) The word rice comes from the Arabic *rouz*.

(*u*) The word *couffe* is Arabic, and ſignifies the oval panniers, made of date-tree leaves, in which the rice is incloſed.

ſown,

ſown, which preſently ripens. Thoſe who prefer a crop of hay inundate the field, and ſow it with lucerne (*x*), which grows ſo faſt that in twenty days it is a foot and a half high, and ſo thick that its ſurface appears one ſolid verdure. It is three times cut before the ſeaſon of tranſplanting the rice: thus, the ſame field will either yield two crops, of grain, one of rice, the other of barley; or four, one of rice and three of hay. This fecundity is, however, peculiar to the Delta; where the land, lying lower than in the Thebaïs, may be watered all the year, by means of the canals and machines above mentioned.

Roſetta has a manufactory of cloth: the flax of the country, long, flexible, and ſilky, would make exceedingly fine linen, did they know how to work it; but the ſpinners are very inexpert; their thread is coarſe, hard, and unequal. The cloth bleached in the dew is for table linen; the reſt, dyed blue, clothes the common people.

One of my walks, round Roſetta, was to ſee the caſtle built by the Mamluks, to defend the

(*x*) The Arabs call it *barſim*; it is the only hay known in Egypt.

paſſage

paſſage of the river. This is a ſquare building, flanked with four towers, containing artillery; and ſtands a league north of the town, on the weſtern bank of the Nile. Fronting it is a platform furniſhed with cannon; and theſe two forts, inconſiderable as they are, would be ſufficient to impede the entrance of ſhips, if the Turks underſtood gunnery. Here however they are ſafe; Nature has been careful to defend the mouth of the Nile, by throwing up a dangerous bar, the terror of mariners; it would even be impoſſible for gun-boats to paſs it, did not the boatmen of the Bogaz ſerve them as pilots.

South of the city, on the bank of the Nile, is a ſmall eminence, in the midſt of which an antique tower, half buried, raiſes its head. A large ſemicircular baſon, beneath, indicates a harbour, at preſent filled up. Some years ago, a Turkiſh merchant, by cauſing part of the rubbiſh to be removed, found twenty beautiful marble columns: this was to him an unfortunate diſcovery. The Beys, thinking he had carried off concealed treaſures, pillaged him of his wealth. None of the learned, who have viſited Egypt, have endeavoured to diſcover what

what city could have been built here (*y*). M. D'Anville ſuſpects the ancient Bolbitinum might have ſtood not far from the place where Roſetta is built; and he was not deceived, for the ruins I deſcribe are near this city, and can only appertain to Bolbitinum, mentioned by Stephanus Byzantinus; which town gave its name to one of the mouths of the Nile.

This is a moſt pictureſque place; the ruinous tower is ſurrounded by tombs; on the weſt is a deſert plain, over the burning extent of which one cannot glance without ſhuddering; the flooding light, reflected from the ſands, pains the ſight, and the picture of ſterility fills the mind with melancholy. But turn to the eaſt and how wonderful the contraſt! How charming the view! Here the majeſtic river is covered with boats, and the Delta with all the graces of ſpring, the beauties of ſummer, and the profuſe richneſs of autumn; as far as the eye can ſee are verdure, fruits, and corn-fields. Is not

(*y*) Neither Niebuhr, Shaw, Pococke, nor Father Sicard, mention it. Maillet, who was an exact obſerver, remarks there had been an ancient city in this place, which, he ſuppoſed, might have been Canopus; but the ſite of Canopus is ſo perfectly deſcribed by Strabo, Pliny, Diodorus Siculus, &c. that there can be no doubt it ſtood where Alboukir now ſtands.

this

this the picture of that Eden where the Creator placed the firſt of mortals?

You are acquainted with the Pſylli, thoſe celebrated ſerpent-eaters of antiquity, who ſported with the bite of vipers and the credulity of the people. Many of them inhabited Cyrene, a city weſt of Alexandria, and formerly dependent on Egypt. You know the pitiful vanity of Octavius, who wiſhed the captive Cleopatra ſhould grace his triumphal car; and, chagrined to ſee that proud woman eſcape by death, commanded one of the Pſylli to ſuck the wound the aſpic had made. Fruitleſs were his efforts; the poiſon had pervaded the whole maſs of blood, nor could the art of the Pſylli reſtore her to life. Would you ſuppoſe, Sir, theſe ſerpent-eaters ſtill exiſt? I myſelf am a witneſs they do, as you ſhall hear.

The feſtival of *Sidi Ibrahim* (z) was laſt week held at Roſetta, and drew a vaſt concourſe of people. A Turk permitted me to ſee the proceſſion from his houſe, where, ſeated at the window, I obſerved this novel ſight with attention. The different trades gravely marched in files,

(z) *Our Lord Abraham.* The Arabs, being deſcendents of Abraham, from Iſhmael, hold him in great veneration, and keep an annual feſtival in his honour.

each

each preceded by its banner; the ſtandard of Mahomet borne in triumph followed, and attracted a prodigious crowd: all were deſirous to touch, kiſs, or put it to their eyes; and thoſe who obtained this favour, returned ſatisfied; the tumult was renewed inceſſantly. After this came the Sheiks, prieſts of the country, wearing leather-caps in the form of a mitre, and ſinging, as they ſlowly walked, the hymns of the Koran. A few paces behind them I perceived a company of men, apparently frantic, with naked arms, wild eyes, and enormous ſerpents in their hands, which twined round their bodies, and endeavoured to eſcape. Theſe Pſylli (*a*), ſeizing them forcibly by the neck, avoided their bite, and, regardleſs of their hiſſes, tore them with their teeth and ate them alive, while the blood ſtreamed from their defiled mouths; other Pſylli ſtruggled with them, to force away their prey; the contention was who ſhould devour a living ſerpent.

The aſtoniſhed populace followed, and cried —A miracle! They ſuppoſed theſe people in-

(*a*) The Pſylli, men of Cyrene, poſſeſſed a ſecret againſt the poiſon of ſerpents. Strabo, lib. xvii.

Perhaps, by feeding on their fleſh, they deſtroyed the effect of their bite.

ſpired,

ſpired, and poſſeſſed by a ſpirit, which deſtroyed the effects of the bite of ſerpents. The deſcription I have ſent you is exact; the ſight firſt terrified me, and afterwards led me to reflect on man, that ſtrange creature, to whom poiſon becomes food; that credulous being, who, blinded by his ignorance, cannot detect a fraud which is annually practiſed, but is prompted to worſhip one of his own ſpecies, who has art ſufficient to deceive him. You perceive, Sir, ancient uſages are not loſt, in a country where that tyrant, cuſtom, has particularly erected his altars and his throne.

I have the honour to be, &c.

LETTER V.

Voyage from Roſetta to Boulac. Obſervations on the manner of navigating the Nile, on the canals cut from it, the towns, villages, and hamlets, built on their banks, the productions and cultivation of the country, and the cuſtoms of the inhabitants.

To M. L. M.

Roſetta, Oct. 1ſt, 1777.

AND now, Sir, be pleaſed to imagine me on board a *mach*, that is to ſay a large two-maſted boat with an agreeable cabin, and a ſmaller one hung with mats curiouſly worked. A tent on the deck ſhades me from the ſun's heat, and, thus ſeated, from this charming proſpect will I endeavour to trace objects as they riſe to view. It is now one o'clock, the anchor is weighed, the ſail ſwells, and the north wind, which blows without intermiſſion at this ſeaſon of the year, with eaſe carries us againſt the current: briſkly we cut the waves which whiten on the prow of our ſmall veſſel. The high minarets of Roſetta diminiſh,

diminiſh, and every moment new and delightful views fix our attention. The ſhores of the Nile abound in reeds, the plains with corn; the rice is maturing for the ſickle, and the wind, agitating its pliant ſurface, makes it reſemble the waving motion of the ſea; the huſbandman, whoſe care it is to water the harveſt, opens the ſluices, or cloſes the dams at pleaſure; the ox turns the noiſy creaking wheel which raiſes the waters; diſtant cots and hamlets riſe, and now and then a few houſes of bricks, ſun-dried; and now we behold a ſmall moſque, with its minaret by turns concealed and ſeen among the tall trees: ſurrounded by the orange, the palm, and ſycamore, every object ſeems to ſpring from the boſom of profuſion and verdure! We have already paſſed various villages, and an iſland, on the banks of which water-melons grow; of theſe we have made ample proviſion, for it is impoſſible to be ſatiated with them. Nurtured in a rich ſoil and ripened by a penetrating ſun, here, amid theſe heats, their melting ſweetneſs is moſt delicious; and, what increaſes their value, moſt healthy; they may be eaten to exceſs, without danger or inconvenience. The iſland where we obtained them lies between the villages *Berimbal* and *Mehallet el Emir*.

Yonder

Yonder we perceive a branching canal, which, quitting the Nile, goes probably and diſcharges its waters in the lake *Behira*, through which there is a paſſage to Canopus; and now we arrive at *Deyrout*, a charming village on the weſtern bank of the Nile.—The ſun declines, and his departing rays gild the towering minarets of Faoua, of which we have a twilight glimpſe; we ſhall remain all night within ſight of this city.

From on board, Oct. 2d.

Faoua is fallen from its ancient greatneſs; in the time of Belon (*b*) it was ſecond only to Grand Cairo. The Venetians kept a conſul there, and merchandiſe was brought thither up the canal that leads to Alexandria; but, this being no longer navigable, Roſetta is now become flouriſhing, and Faoua has loſt, with its commerce, the ſource of its ſplendor. I have taken a haſty ſurvey of it, attended by the janiſſary

(*b*) We have before ſaid Belon viſited Egypt in the fifteenth century, about fifteen years after the Ottoman conqueſt. This naturaliſt traverſed the greateſt part of the Eaſt, and imported various exotics into France. To him we are indebted for the evergreen oak, which, in the depth of winter, preſerves a faint image of ſpring.

who accompanies me. Large ruinous buildings; ſquares, loaded with rubbiſh; brick houſes, out of repair; many moſques, deprived of all ornament; but few inhabitants, and thoſe poor; ſuch are the melancholy remains of this celebrated city of the Mileſians (*c*). Built in the neighbourhood of Canopus, and ſomewhat infected by the ſame immorality, the inhabitants permit proſtitutes to live in a public Kan, and wink at their diſorders. They intercept paſſengers, before whom they ſing and dance, after the manner of their country: nothing can be more licentious than their ſongs, or more laſcivious than their looks and geſtures. In the neighbourhood of this city ſtands Naucratis, which alſo was founded by the Mileſians.

From on board, Oct. 3d.

The ever-favourable north wind has fore-run the dawn, and the mariners have unfurled their ſails; and now with eaſe we cut the rapid current, have already paſt ſeveral iſlands, almoſt under water; and hamlets, of which we caught an occaſional glance amidſt the luxuriant verdure; already we are five miles from Faoua, oppoſite

(*c*) I obſerved, in my firſt letter, that it was the Mileſians who built the city at preſent called Faoua.

the

the mouth of the canal dug by Alexander, and which the negligence of the Turks has ſuffered to be in part filled up. Four leagues down its ſtream ſtands the little town of *Damanhour*, inhabited by Copts and Mahometans, which is the *Hermopolis Parva* deſcribed by Ptolemy. Strabo places it beſide the river, but we muſt underſtand by this the canal of Alexandria. Abulfeda has preciſely marked its ſite (*d*). The neighbouring lands produce much flax, wheat, barley, and cotton, which is an annual plant.

As we advance we ſee multitudes of boats, ſome gliding with, and others ploughing againſt the ſtream; we hear the rude and noiſy muſic of the mariners, who mingle their hoarſe voices with the tambour de baſque and the artleſs reed flute. Theſe concerts charm not the ear, yet do they inſpire the heart with gladneſs. And

(*d*) *Damanhour* is a town of Egypt to the ſouth-eaſt of Alexandria, near the canal which runs thither; it is the capital of *Behira*, and is called *Damanhour* of the deſert (*). Oua men balad maſr Damanhour. Oua hie fi-l-ſhark, oua-l-genoub en Eleſcanderié. Oua hie caadat elbehire. Oua leha Kalig Eleſcanderié. Oua taaref Damanhour el ouaeheſh. Abulfeda, Deſcription of Egypt.

(*) So called to diſtinguiſh it from two towns of the ſame name, it being not far from the deſert in which are the lakes of Natroun.

now herds of oxen low in the meadows; the huſbandmen people the plain to water their harveſts; the maidens come from the villages, to waſh their linen and draw water; they dreſs themſelves beſide the ſtream; their pitchers and their clothing lie ſcattered on the bank; they rub their bodies with the mire of the Nile, plunge into it, and ſport among its waves. Several of them came ſwimming round our boat, and crying *ya ſidi at maydi:* Give me a medin, Sir (*e*). They ſwim with grace, and their hair, knotted in treſſes, floats upon their ſhoulders; their ſkins are of a ſwarthy dark-brown; but, in general, they are exceedingly well formed, and the eaſe with which they ſwim againſt the rapid ſtream, is a proof of the force and agility which exerciſe will beſtow on the moſt delicate bodies. Thus the beauteous Nauſicaa (*f*), having waſhed her garments, bathed with her companions, when Ulyſſes unexpectedly ſtood naked before them (*g*).

The

(*e*) The medin is a ſmall piece of plated copper worth three farthings.

(*f*) Odyſſey, book the 6th.

(*g*) Ulyſſes was ſhipwrecked on the Phæacian coaſt, where, overcome with fatigue, he ſlept, among the brakes,

on

The wind freſhens, and our bark ſwiftly cuts the tide; the tortuous courſe of the Nile every moment preſents us a new proſpect; here a village loſing itſelf in the diſtant horizon, there a town, with a moſque and a grove of orange trees growing by its ſide; and every where dove-houſes, of a pyramidal form, in which innumerable flocks of pigeons are aſſembled. Fed on theſe fertile plains, they are plump and delicate, and only coſt three medins a couple: the inhabitants manure their plantations of water melons with their dung. Night draws on, and each takes to his arms; for the Nile ſwarms with pirates, who attack boats, under favour of the darkneſs, aſſaſſinate paſſengers who are off

on a bed of flowers; thither Nauſicaa and her companions came, to waſh their garments in the river, and having bathed, amuſed themſelves with throwing ſtones: one of them fell near Ulyſſes, who, awaking, ran to the place whence the ſound of voices proceeded. At the ſight of a man, who had no other covering than the bough of a tree, the female ſlaves all fled, but the daughter of Alcinoüs remained. With dignity ſhe liſtened to the unfortunate ſtranger, gave him conſolation, recalled her maidens, commanded them to waſh and clothe him in a tunic and a mantle. The poet has painted, with admirable art, in the perſon of Nauſicaa, the noble dignity of a woman of birth and virtue, who, certain of herſelf, fled not at the ſight of a naked man, and whom, being probably wretched, ſhe might ſuccour.

their guard, and ſeize their effects. We have caſt anchor; the maſter collects his crew, and, with a grave deportment, relates marvellous tales; to which his circular audience liſtens with ſilent attention.

From on board, Oct. 4th.

We have lain all night between a ſmall iſland and the mouth of the canal of Menouf, which communicates with both branches of the Nile, this of Roſetta, and the other of Damietta, and obliquely interſects the Delta. It is fifteen leagues long, very wide, and navigable three months in the year. Four leagues down the ſtream, on its banks, is the pleaſant city of Menouf (*h*), the capital of the province and the reſidence of the bey. It ſtands in the midſt of fertile fields, ſown with wheat, beans, bamier (*i*),

(*h*) The Delta is divided into two provinces, in which two beys reſide. Menouf is the capital of the upper, and Mehala el Kebira of the lower; the firſt is called Menoufia, the latter Garbia.

(*i*) The bamier bears a pyramidal pod, in ſeveral diviſions, of a citron colour, and full of ſpicy ſeed. When cooked with meat, this pod is very wholeſome food, and very agreeable to the taſte. The Egyptians are liberal of it in their ragouts.

and

and dourra (*k*); ſhaded by groves of tamarind and date-trees, and inhabited by flights of pigeons, which, never hearing the terrifying exploſion of powder, are as gentle as our domeſtic doves.

By break of day the north wind had filled our ſails, and we coaſted among iſles, the graſs of which grows exceedingly high, and ſerves as paſturage for buffaloes. The herdſman, ſeated on the withers of the foremoſt, deſcends the banks of the river, ſmacks his whip, and leads the way; the whold herd follow, and lowing ſwim to paſture, blowing the water from their large noſtrils. During the ſummer heats they live in the Nile, lying among the waters up to the neck, and feeding on the tender herb that grows upon its banks. The cows yield abundance of rich milk, of which the inhabitants make excellent butter.

Our view is bounded, on the ſouth, by a grove of dates and ſycamores, behind which the lofty minarets of Terrana appear. This little town,

(*k*) The *Dourra*, or Indian millet, is a tall plant with a reedy leaf; it bears a pod that contains much grain, of which the huſbandmen make bread. Tournefort calls it, *Milium arundinaceum plano alboque ſemine*: Linnæus, *holcus dora glumis villoſis, ſeminibus compreſſis ariſtatis.*

built on the weſt of the Nile, is but eight leagues from the monaſtery of St. Macarius. Hither the natroun is brought, which is obtained from two lakes, and much uſed by the Egyptians. Some miles higher, among the ſhade of palm-trees, we ſee the ſmall port of Ouardan, where Father Sicard burnt heaps of ancient manuſcripts, depoſited in a dove-houſe, pretending they were books of magic (*l*). Thus, in a moment, blind fanaticiſm deſtroys the treaſures of ages.

The ſun has half run his courſe; we have left Ouardan on our right, and, if the wind continues, ſhall reach Boulac to-day. Not a village we paſs but we ſee the children, of both ſexes, exerciſing themſelves by ſwimming: they daub themſelves with mud, plunge into the water, and land but to dive again. Swimming is here the pleaſure of neceſſity. Egypt being every where

(*l*) The following paſſage is from Father Sicard. "I was "informed that a dove-houſe, in this village, was filled with "papers, containing magic characters, bought of ſome reli-"gious Copts and ſchiſmatics: I performed my duty, with-"out reſiſtance, and erected the Jeruſalem crucifix, which "the Copts revere, with great devotion, in their ſtead."—*Lettres Edifiantes*, page 53. By this it appears he there burnt theſe manuſcripts, full of hieroglyphic characters.

inter-

interſected by large and deep canals, which are full of water in the time of inundation, it is often neceſſary to croſs ſeveral of them, in going from one town to another; and, on theſe occaſions, men and women ſtrip themſelves of their light clothing, their ſhirts and drawers, tie them like turbans round the head, and betake themſelves to ſwimming. A European is ſurpriſed to ſee the females preſerving a ſmall morſel of cloth to cover only their faces: a Turk could eaſily explain this phænomenon.

We are arrived at the angle of the Delta where the Nile ſeparates, and where it is two miles wide; the Arabs call this part of it *Batn el Bakara*; the Cow's Belly. And now, for the firſt time, we perceive the tops of the two great pyramids, which are eight leagues diſtant, and are gilded by the rays of the ſetting ſun: they reſemble two pointed mountains, loſt in the clouds. Hail to theſe monuments, the moſt ancient of the works of men! The very ſight inſpires religious awe! How many generations have paſſed away ſince theſe enormous piles have ſtood at the foot of that mountain where they ſtill remain! The ſhades of night envelope them; and our ſailors, now near the end of their voyage, make the air reſound with their riotous

riotous joy; they light up the lantern, which is to prevent the veſſel from being run down, and perhaps ſunk, by the innumerable boats which paſs and repaſs; and we are riding in the midſt of an ever-varying illumination. It is now eleven o'clock, and we have caſt anchor before Boulac, the port of Grand Cairo.

LETTER VI.

Grand Cairo, the capital of Egypt, deſcribed; inquiries concerning its foundation, with proofs from the moſt authentic Arabian writers.

To M. L. M.

I HAVE now been nine months an inhabitant of Grand Cairo, that immenſe city where Europeans crouch in the duſt, and where the name of Frank is opprobrious (*m*). There the frantic laws of Mahomet reign triumphant, and the Muſſulman, ſunk in ignorance, imagines himſelf the moſt ſublime of beings: with ſecret ſatisfaction he applies to himſelf the following texts:

"You are the people on earth moſt excel-
"lent; your laws ordain equity, forbid crimes,
"and you believe in God."

"The Chriſtians, unbelieving Jews, and ido-
"laters, are the moſt perverſe of men; but the

(*m*) The moſt reproachful epithet an Egyptian can uſe is the word Frank, which is the general denomination for Europeans.

"faith-

" faithful, who practiſe virtue, are the moſt " perfect work of Heaven (*n*)."

This oracle, which no one is ſo incredulous as to diſpute, feeds their pride, and they tread under foot all who are not of their faith. To avoid being inſulted by the populace, and accompliſh the purport of my voyage, I have aſſumed the habit and manners of a Turk; my tanned ſkin is become Egyptian; a ſhawl, bound round my head, conceals my hair, and long wiſkers ſhade my cheeks. Thanks to this metamorphoſis, and the eaſe with which I ſpeak Arabic, I unmoleſted walk the ſtreets of this city, and its environs; and live familiar with its ſtrange inhabitants. Curioſity often leads me beyond the limits of prudence, but the voice of reaſon is feeble where an imperious paſſion rules. To this paſſion, however, you are indebted for deſcriptions, which will, at leaſt, poſſeſs the merit of being exact.

Grand Cairo is a modern-built city; this is proved, beyond all doubt, by the writings of the Oriental hiſtorians. I will cite their own words; for, when we ſpeak of their times, they themſelves can certainly afford us the beſt information.

(*n*) Koran.

In

" In the year 358 of the Hegira (*o*), *Jauhar*, " General of *Moaz*, and deſcendant of the prin- " ces of *Kirouan*, entered Egypt, at the head of " a formidable army, and conquered it from the " Abaſſides (*p*). From that time, the prayers " were read in the name of the Fatimites (*q*). " The conqueror, wanting a place in which to " eſtabliſh his ſoldiers, laid the foundations of " Elkahera (*r*), built a palace for the emperor, " and commanded the nobility and army to in- " habit this new city. Four years after this, " Moaz forſook his kingdom in Barbary, and " came to enjoy his conqueſt. This year the " building of Grand Cairo was completed, and

(*o*) Elmacin, page 222.

(*p*) The caliphs of Bagdad, ſlumbering upon the throne, were ſucceſſively ſtripped of their vaſt dominions, by their governors; till, of a power which made the whole world tremble, nothing remained, except the title, and the barren privilege of being named firſt at prayers in all the moſques. The conqueſt of Moaz deprived them of that honour, which was not reſtored to them till 207 years after, when Salah Eddin, of the family of the Ayoubites, ſeized on Egypt.

(*q*) The Fatimite caliphs derive their origin from Ali, who eſpouſed Fatima, the daughter of Mahomet. In the year 296 of the Hegira, they founded a kingdom on the coaſt of Africa; where they reigned till the year 567.

(*r*) The city the Europeans call Grand Cairo.

" the

" the dominion of the Fatimites rendered per-
" manent."

Moaz, in a mandate to his ſon, has the following words. " At the moment this city was " founded, the planet Mars was in aſcenſion; " and it is Mars who conquers the univerſe (*s*); " therefore have I given it the name of Elkahe-" ra (*t*)." The foundation of Grand Cairo has been a ſubject of diſpute, and error, among travellers, and learned men (*u*); permit me, therefore, Sir, to add, to the teſtimony of Elmacin, the deſcription of Abulfeda (*x*). This writer, famous

(*s*) The excavations were dug, which ſurrounded the city; materials were prepared; the aſtronomers, with mathematical inſtruments, obſerved the aſcent of Mars; at the proper moment, the ſignal was given, and the foundation of Elkahera was laid, with ſhouts of joy.

(*t*) The word Elkahera is the name of the planet Mars; and likewiſe ſignifies victorious.

(*u*) Proſper Alpinus ſays, " Grand Cairo is the city which " the ancients called Memphis." *Voyage d' Egypte*, page 17.

Father Sicard pretends Grand Cairo was built by Ebn el Aas, the lieutenant of Omar. *Lettres Edifiantes*, page 466.

The paſſages I have cited are ſufficient to refute theſe European writers; whoſe opinion, void of proof, is contradictory to all Oriental hiſtory.

(*x*) " Oua ala janeb el Foſtat men ſhamaliha, medinet el-" kahera, ahedſha elkolfa elfatemioun Ellazin Zaharou Bel-" garb,

famous both as a geographer and hiſtorian, has bequeathed us many intereſting particulars no where elſe to be found.

" Beſide Foſtat (*y*), a little to the north, ſtands " the city of Elkahera, built by the Fatimite " caliphs. Theſe princes, who had founded an " empire on the coaſt of Barbary, became ma- " ſters of Egypt. The firſt conqueror who reign- " ed there was Moaz, the ſon of Elmanſor.— " He laid the foundation of Cairo, in the year " 359 of the Hegira.—The ground on which " it was built was a garden, belonging to the " ſon of Toulon (*z*), which ſtood beſide the royal " quarter

" garb, tom melekóu el maſr; oua kan aoual men melek " menhom bemaſr Moaz ebn Elmanſor—Oua akhtat elka- " hera fi ſéné teſſaa oua khamſin, oua talat maïat; oua ca- " net elkahera biſtanlbe, tailoun, ala elcarb men medinet " melkhom elmaroufé balcataïah; oua ſamet elkahera l'el- " tefaoual ai ickhor men khalef amrha; oua elkahera leiſt " ala ſhatt el Nil, belfi ſharkio; oua el Foſtat ala hafat el " Nil; oua hie mahatt, ou acllaa lelmarakeb, oua beſabab " Zalek ſar el Foſtat actar rezca, oua arkas aſaara men el- " kahera." *Abulfeda's Deſcription of Egypt.*

(*y*) Foſtat is the city which we improperly call Old Cairo.

(*z*) Toulon, a famous governor of Egypt, rebelled againſt Abou Elabbas, the ſon of Elmetouakkel, the fifteenth caliph of the Abaſſides, in the year 264 of the Hegira, and made himſelf maſter of the country, over which his deſcendants reigned

" quarter of Catayah (*a*), in which he reſided. " This new city was named Elkahera, as pre- " dictive of the conqueſts it ſhould hereafter ob- " tain over its enemies. It is not, like Foſtat, " ſituated beſide the river Nile, but a little to " the eaſt; for which reaſon the latter is beſt ad- " apted to trade; boats come up to it from all " Egypt, and proviſions are exceedingly cheap " there."

Abulfeda, and experience, both tell us the ſituation of Grand Cairo is not ſo advantageous as that of Foſtat; nor is its diſtance from the Nile the only diſadvantage felt there: the ſteril chain of mountains, called Mokattam, totally void of verdure, preſenting a proſpect of arid ſand, and ſtones calcined by the ſun, are on its eaſt; and, when the north wind does not blow, reflect a ſuffocating heat on the city; the inha-

reigned till the year 292, when, being vanquiſhed by Mahommed, general of Mocteſi Bellah, the ſeventeeth caliph of the Abaſſides, they were brought to Bagdad. Elmacin.

(*a*) Toulon built a ſuburb, on the north of Foſtat, ſo large that they called it the royal city of Catayah. This ſuburb is now included in Grand Cairo, and ſtill contains a magnificent moſque, which this prince cauſed to be built, as well as the palace he inhabited, which is at preſent known by the name of Calaa elkabeck.

bitants

bitants breathe a burning air, and are obliged to wait till night for refreſhing coolneſs. For this reaſon, it was long before any thing was to be ſeen where Cairo now ſtands but gardens, pleaſure houſes, and barracks for the troops; it owes its ſudden increaſe to an incident which I ſhall relate with pleaſure, becauſe it affects our own hiſtory. The French, under the command of king Luſignan, extended their conqueſts over Syria, and carried their victorious arms as far as Egypt. "In the year 564 of the Hegira (*b*) "they took Belbeis by aſſault, put a part of the "inhabitants to the ſword, and led the reſt cap-"tive. Elated with ſucceſs, they marched tow-"ard, and ſeized on, Cairo. *Shaouar*, king "of Egypt, ſet fire to Foſtat, fearing it would "fall into their hands; and the flames ſpread "ſo rapidly that the city burnt during four

(*b*) "Oua fi ſéné arba oua ſettin oua khamsé miat el-"frangi melekou belbes, oua nahabouha, oua catalou ahel-"ha, oua eſrouhom; tom ſarou men belbes oua nazelou ala "elkahera oua haſerouha. Feharac *Shaouar* medinet maſr "raufan men en iemlekha elfrangi; ſe baquait elnar teh-"rokha arbaat oua khamſin ioum; oua ſaneh *Shaouar* el-"frangi, ala elf elf dinar, iehmelha eleihom, ſe hamal "eleihom maïat elf dinar, ſe ſalhom en ierhelou an elkahera "leicdar ala gema elmal oua hafalo, ſe rahalou." Abulfeda.

" and fifty days. Unable to repel, by force, " his enterprifing enemies, this feeble prince " had recourfe to artifice; he gave them a hun- " dred thoufand dinars (crowns of gold) and pro- " mifed them a million, on condition they would " retire; they did fo, and loft their conqueft " and the promifed fum."

By the difafter of Foftat, Grand Cairo became enriched; the unfortunate inhabitants quitted their afhes, and took refuge in the new city, which aflumed the pompous furname of *Mafr*, peculiar to the capital of Egypt, and *Salah Eddin* came here, and eftablifhed the dynafty of the Ayoubites (*c*).

" In the year 572 of the Hegira, he built the " walls which furround Grand Cairo, and the " caftle on mount Mokattam (*d*). The circum- " ference

(*c*) The famous Salah Eddin, or Saladin, who twenty years warred with the Franks, and drove them almoft entirely from the Eaft, was appointed governor of Eygpt, by Nour Eddin, in the year 564 of the Hegira, of which he became fovereign three years after, and rapidly extended his conquefts in Syria and Mefopotamia. He was born at *Tecrit*, a ftrong place between Bagdad and Moful, in the year 553 of the Hegira, and died at Damafcus in 582.

(*d*) " Fi hade effené (etnin oua khamsé maïat) amar Sa- " lah

" ference of theſe walls was 29,300 cubits " (about three leagues), and he continued this " work till his death (*e*)."

Theſe walls are ſtill almoſt perfect, though occaſionally much concealed by ruins and houſes: they have ſeveral gates, of ſimple and majeſtic architecture; which, with ſome moſques, deſerve the admiration of travellers. Salah Eddin, the protector of letters, built a univerſity in the quarter of *Caraffe*; alſo the beautiful moſque in which is the tomb of *Shaffey*, the founder of one of the four ſects of the Sunnites (*f*). The moſque ſtill ſubſiſts, but the univerſity is in ruins, and the academy *Djamah Elaſhar* (the moſque of flowers) has ſupplied its place. Arts and ſciences flouriſhed till the Turks became maſters

" lah Eddin beinan eſſour eddiar ala maſr elkahera, oua el- " kalaat ala eggebal elmokattam. Oua dour telk teſſaat oua " aſherin elf draa, oua talat maïat draa, oua lam izel claml " il a en mat."

Life of Salah Eddin.

(*e*) This paſſage abſolutely overturns the opinion of Father Sicard, who ſays the caſtle was built by Queen Semiramis; and alſo that of Shaw, Niebuhr, and many other writers, who have ſuppoſed it the fortreſs of Babylon, which the Perſians built in Egypt.

(*f*) Thoſe ſects of the Sunnites, called orthodox by the Mahometans, are *Shaffey*, *Hanefi*, *Hanbali*, and *Malcki*.

of

of Egypt, but then decayed. Enemies to human knowledge, they have ſtifled wiſdom and learning throughout their whole empire: their only ſtudies, at preſent, are theology, while their innumerable commentators have made a chaos of the Koran; grammar, which is neceſſary to read this book correctly, in which is contained their religion and laws; and aſtrology, a ſtudy to which ignorant nations always are addicted.

In the fifteenth century, Grand Cairo was one of the richeſt and moſt flouriſhing cities in the world, the emporium of Europe and Aſia, and traded from the Straits of Gibraltar to the fartheſt limits of India. The diſcovery of the Cape of Good-hope, and the Ottoman conqueſt, have deprived it of a great part of its opulence and ſplendor: yet, notwithſtanding many of its canals, which brought the treaſures of the Eaſt and Weſt, are become dry, and the city itſelf groans under the yoke of the Pacha and four and twenty Beys, its admirable ſituation, and the fertility of Egypt, are advantages ſo great that, in a ſpace of three leagues, it ſtill contains a multitudinous people, and immenſe riches.

I hope, Sir, the authorities above cited will aſcertain

aſcertain the origin of Grand Cairo. Before I am more circumſtantial concerning this city, it ſeems neceſſary to deſcribe Foſtat, of which I have ſpoken ſo much: and this will be the ſubject of my next letter.

I have the honour to be, &c.

LETTER VII.

Foſtat founded by Amrou Ebn El Aas: the city, its inhabitants and monuments, with the ancient canal that ran to the Red Sea, deſcribed. Refutation of thoſe authors who have ſuppoſed this city to be the ancient Babylon, founded by Semiramis.

To M. L. M.

THE city of Foſtat, commonly called Old Cairo, has been, Sir, the ſubject of many diſcuſſions among the learned who have written on Egypt (*g*). Moſt of them, ſearching Greek and

(*g*) M. Maillet pretends the governors of Egypt, under the emperors of Conſtantinople, made Foſtat their place of reſidence, when Amrou ſon of El Aas took it, after a long ſiege. *Deſcription de l'Egypte, tome* 1, *p.* 194.—This is an error.

Shaw, ſpeaking after the geographer of Nubia, ſays, "The city of Foſtat is the very ſame called Maſr, a name "derived from Miſraim, the ſon of Ham, the ſon of Noah, "to whom be peace, for he was its firſt founder." Shaw's Travels, p. 294.—This opinion is far from the truth.

Father

and Latin authors for its origin, have been deceived: had they looked into the annals of the Eaſt, they would have found the truth, and avoided a multitude of errors which have glided into their deſcriptions. I ſhall follow my uſual plan, and, inſtead of opinion, cite facts.

"In the twentieth year of the Hegira, Amrou, ſon of El Aas, built Maſr Foſtat, in the very place where he had encamped before he went to the ſiege of Alexandria. His tent was left ſtanding there, becauſe he would not deſtroy a dove's neſt and her young; returning from his conqueſt, the general laid the foundation of the city, to which he gave the name of Foſtat (*h*)."

This paſſage preciſely marks the foundation of Foſtat, where the governors ſent by the Caliphs fixed their reſidence. It took the ſurname

Father Sicard, citing Joſephus, ſays, "Old Cairo was the ancient Lété. Cambyſes ſettled the Babylonians in this city; who, having conquered Egypt, remained there." *Lettres Edifiantes, p.* 473.

Old Cairo was not built in the time of Joſephus, as hiſtory teſtifies; but the fortreſs of Babylon, ſtanding near the place where that city was built, remained.

(*h*) Elmacin, Hiſtory of the Arabs.—Foſtat, in Arabic, ſignifies tent.

of Maſr (*i*), which Memphis had before borne, and which the Arabs always gave to the capital of Egypt; and its ſituation, on the banks of the Nile, and near a canal communicating with the Red Sea, ſoon made it flouriſh. It was about two leagues in circumference, when Shaouar (*k*), five hundred years after its foundation, ſet it on fire, to preſerve it from the French. This was the fatal period of its power; for, with its inhabitants, it loſt its trade and riches. Grand Cairo then became the abode of lords and kings, and received the pompous name of *Maſr*. Foſtat, then, added the epithet *Elatik*, ſignifying the ancient, to that of Maſr, which it preſerves to this day (*l*).

To

(*i*) The Arabs pretend that Miſraim, the ſon of Ham, came and ſettled in Egypt, which they, therefore, call Maſr; and beſtow the ſame epithet on the metropolis of the country.

(*k*) See the preceding letter.

(*l*) The oriental hiſtorians have never called Foſtat by the name of Kahera (Cairo); they firſt named it Foſtat, then Foſtat Maſr; and, ſince its decline, Maſr Elatik. The Venetian merchants firſt gave it the name of Old Cairo, and travellers have repeated the error.

Oua Foſtat madiné mahedra benaha amrou ebn elaas, lamma fatah diar maſr fi khalafet Omar. Oua can fi mauda el Foſtat Caſr men bena elaouail iecal lo caſr elſhamah, ſe

can

To the above deſcription of Elmacin the learned Abulfeda adds circumſtances which throw great light on hiſtory. "Amrou, ſon "of El Aas, having conquered Egypt, laid the "foundation of Foſtat, under the caliphate of "Omar. Near the place on which he built it "was an antique caſtle, called *the Caſtle of* "*Lights*. The moſque of Omar, built at a "little diſtance from the ground on which the "general had erected his tent, ſtood within the "city. Foſtat Maſr was the ſeat of govern-"ment in Egypt, till the time that Ebn Toulon "built, north of its walls, the ſuburb of *Catay-*"*ah*, to which he retired with his army, and "there founded the celebrated temple which "bears his name (*m*)."

The outlines of the caſtle, mentioned by Abulfeda, ſtill remain. They are thick walls, in the form of a parallelogram, the antiquity of

can Foſtat amrou be janeb el jameh elmarouf bejamèh Omar be maſr. Oua lam tezel maſr, oua hié Foſtat courch lel-memleké eddiar elmaſriat hetta taula ahmed Ebn Toulon. Oua bena lo oua l'aſquero elcataïah fi ſhemali maſr. Oua bena and *elcataïah* djamèh elmarouf be djamèh Tailoun. Abulfeda, Deſcription of Egypt, p. 33.

(*m*) I mentioned this temple in the preceding letter; it is one of the moſt beautiful moſques in Grand Cairo.

which

which is very ſtriking. It ſtands eaſt of Foſtat, on the ſide of mount Mokattam. Chriſtians inhabit theſe ruins, among which the Greeks and Copts have churches. Several ancient arches are ſtill ſtanding, between this place and the river; there are others half deſtroyed, and a hexagonal building, on the banks of the Nile, denotes the remains of the aqueduct which conveyed water to the caſtle. Here then, Sir, behold the fortreſs of Babylon; an object of reſearch and error to ſo many of the learned: it was built by the Perſians when they ravaged Egypt, under Cambyſes; or, as other writers will have it, when Semiramis came there, at the head of a formidable army. We may know it from the deſcription of Strabo (*n*). The Perſians, who adored the ſun, kept a perpetual fire

(*n*) Up the Nile, above Heliopolis, now called Mataree, two leagues from Grand Cairo, is the Caſtle of Babylon, fortified by nature and art; it was built by ſome Babylonians, who, with the conſent of their ſovereign, retired thither. Here the Romans keep one of the three legions, who guard Egypt, in garriſon. The mountain gently deſcends from that fortreſs to the banks of the Nile; a hundred and fifty ſlaves are continually employed in raiſing water thither, by the means of wheels and ſcrews. Strabo, lib. 17.

here,

here, which occaſioned the Arabs to name it *the caſtle of lights* (*o*).

Maſr Elatik is only half a league in extent, but is ſtill very populous, and tolerably commercial. The boats from Upper Egypt come here, and from hence aſcend again up the Said (*p*). The Copts are very numerous, and have ſeveral churches in this place, the largeſt of which is that of St. Macarius, where the patriarch is inſtalled. The church of St. Sergius contains a cavern which the Chriſtians hold in great veneration, pretending that the holy family, flying from Herod, retired here. I ſaw the hiſtory of this flight painted on the door of a receſs, in which they ſay maſs: the coſtume of the Eaſt is perfectly obſerved in this picture, and the head of the Virgin tolerable. The neglect of coſtume, among modern painters, too often deſtroys the effect of their fineſt compoſitions.

A hexagonal building ſtands at the entrance

(*o*) Niebuhr has given the parallelogram figure of this caſtle, in his plan of Cairo; but he has taken it for the citadel, the honour of conſtructing which he has beſtowed upon the Arabs.

(*p*) The Arabs call Upper Egypt, Said, beginning above Maſr Foſtat, and ending at Aſſouan, formerly Syene.

of

of Old Cairo, each ſide of which is eighty feet wide, and one hundred high. Oxen mount up a very gentle aſcent, and turn a wheel, which raiſes water to the ſummit of this building: five baſons receive and return the water into an aqueduct, ſuſtained by three hundred arches, which conveys it into a reſervoir; there other oxen, and a new machine, raiſe it to the palace of the Pacha. This is a work of the Arabs, which they have conſtructed according to the plan of that deſcribed by Strabo, the remains of which are ſeen between the citadel of Babylon and the Nile; the only difference is, the Mahometans employ oxen inſtead of men.

The environs of Maſr Elatik are ſcattered over with ruins, which indicate its ancient extent, and which, were hiſtory defective, would ſufficiently atteſt it to be modern. They want that majeſtic character the Egyptians gave their edifices, and the impreſſion of which time cannot efface. Neither ſphinx, column, nor obeliſk can be found, among theſe heaps of rubbiſh. Within the city are thick walls, round a great ſquare, in which they depoſit the corn of the Thebaïs, deſtined for the proviſion of the troops. This incloſure they call Joſeph's granaries; and the name has impoſed upon ſome

travel-

travellers, who have taken it, without examination, for the work of the ſon of Jacob, though there is nothing appertaining to it which beſpeaks antiquity, and hiſtory has informed us it was built by the Mamluk kings. Memphis, the reſidence of the Pharaohs, was the place where Joſeph, the ſuperintendant of the corn of Egypt, erected his magazines.

Juſt without Maſr Elatik, near the water works, the *khalig* (*q*), which runs through Grand Cairo, and which is annually opened with ſo much ceremony, begins. Moſt modern writers have attributed this canal to the emperor Trajan (*r*) on the authority of that paſſage in Ptolemy, which ſays, the river of Trajan runs between Heliopolis and Babylon; but this emperor cut no canal in Egypt; a work of this

(*q*) The Arabs call all canals, *khalig*.

(*r*) Shaw calls it, *amnis Trajanus*. Shaw's Travels, p. 294.

Pococke ſays—"Oppoſite to this reſervoir of water, at "the Nile, is the canal that conveys the water to Cairo, "and ſeems to be that which was made by Trajan." Poc. Trav. vol. I. p. 27.

Father Sicard goes farther, and ſays—"This is the canal "which Ptolemy calls amnis Trajanus; Quintus Curtius, "Oxius; and the Arabs, Merakemi." Lettres Edifiantes, p. 470.

kind

kind muſt be attributed to his ſucceſſor, who built the city of Antinoë. The canal Ptolemy means begins a league and a half below Old Cairo, and paſſes near Heliopolis; and this is what Macrizi (*s*), with reaſon, calls the khalig of Adrian.

The origin of the canal, the mouth of which is at Maſr Elatik, is too well deſcribed by Elmacin, for any one, who conſults oriental hiſtory, to confound it with that of Adrian. Amrou having ſent intelligence to Omar of the taking of Alexandria, and camels loaded with wheat to Medina, then ravaged by famine, the Caliph congratulated him on his ſucceſs, and thus added: "Dig a khalig (*t*), by which the productions "of Egypt may be taken into the ſea of Col-"zoum (*u*), and from thence to the port of "Medina. Amrou executed this great work, "and dug the khalig to which the name of *the "river of the princes of the faithful* was "given (*x*); and the veſſels which go from

(*s*) Macrizi, Hiſtory of Egypt.

(*t*) Elmacin, Hiſtory of the Arabs.

(*u*) Colzoum is the name the Arabs give to the Red Sea; it was derived from the ſmall town of Colzoum, the ruins of which are ſome diſtance from Suez.

(*x*) *Khalig el emir el moumenin.*

"Foſtat

" Foſtat carry the productions of Egypt into " the ſea of Colzoum."

This, Sir, was the origin of the famous canal which travellers, repeating each other's words, have called amnis Trajanus. It begins near Foſtat, runs, lengthwiſe, through Grand Cairo, fills the ponds of that city, and empties itſelf, ſome leagues beyond, in the *Birque* (*y*) of the pilgrims of Mecca. The various princes who have ſucceſſively reigned over Egypt, ſeveral of whom were enemies to the Caliphs, have ſuffered it to become dammed up, and it no longer empties its waters into the Red Sea; but, as it was cut through rocks for the ſpace of twenty-four leagues, the mud and ſand with which it is filled might eaſily be removed. By this important communication with the Red Sea, Grand Cairo would once more become the moſt wealthy and commercial city in the world.

Let me hope, Sir, your love for truth will indulge me in theſe diſcuſſions, ſince they ſerve to throw light on certain parts of hiſtory which have been in the utmoſt obſcurity. I ſhall ſoon have occaſion to enliven and make my narrative

(*y*) *Birque* is an Arabic word, ſignifying an extenſive piece of water.

more

more agreeable; the country where I am at preſent is another world, preſenting ſcenes continually new; I will endeavour to trace them ſuch as they are. You ſhall hear the Turks ſpeak for themſelves, ſhall ſee them act, and I will leave to you the ſatisfaction which the enlightened mind always takes in judging for itſelf.

I have the honour to be, &c.

LET-

LETTER VIII.

The extent of Grand Cairo; its ſtreets, ſquares, and moſques. The palace of Salah Eddin, built on a height which overlocks the city, where are found ſtately columns of granite, and the famous well of Joſeph, deſcribed.

To M. L. M.

Grand Cairo.

THE length of Grand Cairo, Sir, built on each ſide of the canal of the prince of the faithful, is one league and a half from north to ſouth; and three quarters of a league in width from eaſt to weſt. Its whole extent is beſt ſeen from the caſtle, built by Salah Eddin, on Mount Mokattam (z), which overlooks the city, by which it is half encircled, like an immenſe creſcent. The ſtreets are ſo narrow and winding

(z) Mokattam ſignifies cut, and this rock is ſo called becauſe it has been ſeparated by art from the mountain which, beginning at the cataracts, ends here: and from which it is only about a hundred paces diſtant.

that it is impoſſible to follow their direction, amidſt the multitude of houſes which ſtand crowding on each other; vaſt vacancies only can be diſtinguiſhed, and theſe arē ſquares which become ponds in the time of inundation, and gardens the reſt of the year. They are rowed over in September, and covereed with flowers and verdure in April. Some of the many temples with which this city abounds, tower like citadels; and once, during the time of ſedition, the rebels retired to the moſque of ſultan Haſſan, from the top of which they battered the caſtle with cannon. There is a vaſt dome over this grand edifice; its cornice, groteſquely ſculptured, projects conſiderably, and its front is faced with the fineſt marble: the gates are now walled up, and are guarded by janiſſaries.

Grand Cairo contains near three hundred moſques, moſt of them with minarets, which are high ſteeples of light architecture, and ſurrounded by galleries. Theſe give an agreeable variety to a city which, from the flatneſs of its roofs, appears uniform. Public criers, at appointed hours (*a*), call the people to prayers from

(*a*) That is to ſay, at ſun-riſing, noon, three o'clock, ſun-ſetting,

from theſe minarets: about eight hundred voices are heard at the ſame moment, from all quarters of the city, calling man to the performance of his duty to God. The Turks abhor the noiſe of bells, and ſay it offends the ears, is unmeaning, and proper only for beaſts of burthen. They derive this opinion from Mahomet, who, like a great politician, deſirous that all his inſtitutions ſhould have one tendency, and willing to captivate both the ſenſes and underſtanding, rejected the trumpet of the Jews, and the rattle of the Oriental Chriſtians. He knew the human voice would make a greater impreſſion on the mind of man than the grating ſound of inſenſible braſs, and produced a holy ſummons, ſent by heaven, conformable to his views (*b*).

The caſtle of Cairo ſtands on a ſteep rock, and is ſurrounded by thick walls, on which are

ſetting, and about two hours after. Theſe different ſervices are called *Salaat el Fegr, el dohr, el aſr, el magreb, el aſha.*

(*b*) The following is the form of this ſummons: God is great. I bear witneſs there is but one God; I bear witneſs that Mahomet is his prophet. Come to prayer; come to worſhip. God is great; he is only one God.

Allah Acbar. Eſhhed en la ila ella allah; eſhhed en Mahammed raſoul allah. Haï ala es ſalat; haï ala el falah, Allah Acbar. La ila ella allah.

ſtrong towers. It was a place of great force before the invention of gunpowder, but, being commanded by the neighbouring mountains, it would not now ſtand the fire of a battery erected there two hours. It is more than the fourth of a league in circumference; the rock being ſteep, there are two roads cut to it, which lead to doors guarded by aſſabs and janiſſaries (*c*). The firſt watch the lower part of the fortreſs, and the others what is properly called the citadel, whence, with ſix wretched pieces of artillery, turned on the Pacha's apartment, they oblige him to retire, as ſoon as the Beys have given the command.

This caſtle includes the palaces of the ſultans of Egypt, now almoſt buried under their own ruins; domes overthrown, heaps of rubbiſh, gilding, and pictures, the colours of which have defied corroding time, ſtately marble columns ſtill ſtanding, but in general without capitals; ſuch are the tokens of its former magnificence. In one of the halls of theſe ruinous buildings the rich carpet is fabricated which the

(*c*) The aſſabs and janiſſaries are troops belonging to the Grand Signor, but always bought from their duty by the Beys.

Emir

Emir Hadge (*d*) bears every year to Mecca; the old carpet is obtained in bits, by the pilgrims, as holy relics, and the new covers the Caaba, or temple of Abraham (*e*).

The Pachas inhabit a large building, containing nothing remarkable, the windows of which look towards the ſquare Caramaydan. The hall of audience, where the Divan aſſembles three times a week, is as long, but not ſo wide, as that of the Palais (the juſtice chamber) at Paris, and is ſtained by the blood of the Beys, maſſacred ſome years ago by order of the Porte. Theſe are, however, at preſent, the ſovereigns of Egypt; for the Grand Signor's repreſentative is a phantom with which they ſport: they keep him to ſerve their own purpoſes, then diſmiſs him with ſhame. He cannot leave his palace, in which he is a priſoner, without their permiſſion. Thus humbled is the Ottoman pride, thus feeble, thus reduced is the empire which threatened to enſlave Europe!

The mint is beſide Caramaydan, where they

(*d*) Emir Hadge, or prince of the caravan, is the title of the Bey who undertakes to eſcort the caravan which departs every year from Cairo to Mecca.

(*e*) See *Abrégé de la Vie de Mahomet*, by Savary, p. 4.

coin a prodigious quantity of medins, and ſequins (*f*), ſtruck with the die of the Sheik Elbalad (*g*), which I have ſeveral times viſited. The ſequins are made of the gold-duſt ſupplied by the caravan of Abyſſinia, which the maſter of the mint aſſured me annually brought more than 166,666l. ſterling.

Joſeph's well is among the things the moſt curious the caſtle contains (*h*). It is ſunk in the rock, two hundred and eighty feet deep, and forty-two in circumference. It includes two excavations, not perpendicular to each other. A ſtair-caſe, the deſcent of which is exceedingly gentle, is carried round; the partition which ſeparates this ſtair-caſe from the well is part of the rock, left only ſix inches thick, with windows cut, at intervals, to give light; but as they are ſmall, and ſome of them low, it is ne-

(*f*) A ſequin is a gold coin, worth about ſix and threepence.

(*g*) The Bey moſt powerful, in Grand Cairo, aſſumes the title Sheik Elbalad, governor of the country, and the right of coining.

(*h*) Pococke ſays a viſir named Joſeph ſunk this well, about ſeven hundred years ago, by order of ſultan Mahammed, the ſon of Calaoun: the Egyptians affirm it was Salah Eddin. It certainly, however, is the work of the Arabs, and not the Babylonians, as father Sicard pretends.

ceſſary

ceſſary to deſcend by the light of candles. There is a reſervoir, and a level ſpace, at that part of the well where it takes a new direction; and oxen which turn a machine that draws water from the bottom of the well. Other oxen, above, raiſe it from this reſervoir by a ſimilar machine. This water comes from the Nile; and, as it has been filtered through ſand impregnated with ſalt and nitre, is brackiſh.

The ruins of the palace of Salah Eddin are in the janiſſaries' quarter, and include the divan of Joſeph (*i*), the dome of which, and a part of the walls, have fallen. There are thirty columns of red granite ſtill ſtanding: the ſhaft of each, forty five feet high, is a ſingle ſtone. The variations in their ſize, and the ornaments ſculptured round the capitals, beſpeak their having been taken from more ancient monuments. Some diſtance from theſe beautiful columns is a delightful balcony, or pavilion, ſtanding in the higheſt part of the citadel, the proſpect from which is moſt extenſive. The whole of Grand Cairo, with its multitudinous moſques and minarets, is ſeen at a view. Towards Boulac, fruit-

(*i*) Salah Eddin was called Joſeph, the ſon of Ayoub; his other names are pompous titles, given him by the Mahometans, on account of his victories over the Chriſtian princes, whom he drove out of Syria.

ful fields, and rich harveſts, interſperſed with groves of date-trees; Maſr Foſtat, on the ſouth-weſt, and the plains of Said beyond, which, when inundated by the Nile, contain hamlets ſcattered up and down like iſlands. The landſcape is terminated by the pyramids, which, like pointed mountains, appear loſt in the clouds. The eye is never weary of objects ſo various and ſo grand, and I have more than once enjoyed this view. The freſh air breathed in this elevated ſituation, and the coolneſs it imparts, is an additional pleaſure. Seated in this delightful pavilion, how many agreeable thoughts ariſe in the mind; yet how ſuddenly are theſe ſweet meditations diſturbed by gloomy melancholy! Here, in theſe rich fields, arts and ſciences once flouriſhed, where now an ignorant and barbarous people trample them under foot. Tyranny, with its iron ſceptre, is become the ſcourge of this firſt of countries, in which the miſeries of men ſeem to increaſe in proportion to the efforts of nature to render them happy! It was but yeſterday, Sir, I was deeply affected by theſe reflections, when, walking before the caſtle, I beheld the magnificent proſpect I have deſcribed.

I have the honour to be, &c.

LETTER IX.

Boulac, the port of Grand Cairo, its magazines, environs, and the gardens of Hellai deſcribed; with curious details concerning the Mekias, or Nilometer, on the beautiful iſland Raouda, which abounds in delightful groves.

To M. L. M.

Grand Cairo.

YOU have more than once, Sir, ſeen Boulac mentioned in my letters. This is the place where all the merchandiſe, coming from Damietta and Alexandria, is landed. This modern town, only half a league from Grand Cairo, on the eaſtern bank of the Nile, is two miles long, but narrow. It contains ſuperb public baths, and vaſt okals. Theſe are ſquare buildings, including a large court with a portico, over which is a winding gallery: the ground floor is divided into ſpacious magazines, and the rooms above have neither furniture nor ornaments. Here ſtrangers live, and depoſit their wares; and, theſe okals, having only one gate, like that of a citadel,

citadel, are ſecure, in time of revolt, from all inſult. Theſe are the only inns in Egypt, and ſtrangers are obliged to find their own furniture and food; for, in this country, money cannot procure dinners ready dreſſed.

In front of the houſes of Boulac are ſeen thouſands of veſſels, of various forms and ſizes, at anchor. Some, large and ſtrong, carrying two maſts, are trading barks; theſe uſually have a large cabin for paſſengers; others, light, and without decks, are only to ferry the people from one ſide of the river to the other. A third ſort are pleaſure boats, artfully carved and painted, containing charming cabins, carpeted over, and affording ſhelter from the ſun's heat. Here reclined at eaſe on cuſhions, the wealthy go to breathe that freſh and cooling air which is continually active upon the Nile, and here admire the variegated landſcapes which its ever verdant banks preſent. When the wind is favourable the ſail is hoiſted, and theſe light boats ſeem to fly over the ſurface of the water; when contrary, robuſt watermen give them almoſt equal ſpeed.

Oppoſite Boulac is the ſmall village of Enbaba, conſiſting of miſerable mud huts, built of a round form, under the ſhade of ſycamores, againſt

gainſt which they reſt, ſome houſes of ſun-dried bricks, and a ſmall moſque, which is ſeen at a diſtance among the foliage of dates and tamarinds. The inhabitants of Cairo go there to buy excellent butter, during winter; and, in ſummer, delicious melons.

Half a league north-eaſt of Boulac is the old caſtle of Hellai (*k*), which is falling in ruins. Here the Beys, accompanied by their ſtately train; go to receive the new Pacha, and conduct him in pomp to the priſon from which they have juſt expelled his predeceſſor. Round this caſtle are ſpacious incloſures, where the orange, citron, and pomegranate, planted without order, grow exceedingly high and tufted: their twining branches form charming arbours, over which the ſycamore and palm extend their dark green foliage, and among them rivulets mæander, and the cluſtering roſe and bazil bloom (*l*). It is impoſſible to deſcribe the delight of breathing the freſh air beneath theſe enchanting ſhades: under a climate ſo continually poſſeſſing the burning heat of the dog-days, this pleaſure on-

(*k*) It ſeems probable this caſtle derived its name from Heliopolis, from which it is not far diſtant.

(*l*) The bazil, in Egypt, grows thrice as high as in France, and exceedingly tufted and odoriferous.

ly

ly can be felt. The odour of the orange flower, and the aromatic emanations of balſamic plants, gently renovate the ſenſes, benumbed by heat, and infuſe the moſt agreeable ſenſations. It is dangerous for a European to frequent theſe groves too much, being peopled by concubines, whom the jealous Turks, if they ſlip, never pardon,

Ignoſcenda quidem, ſcirent ſi ignoſcere manes.

Beyond theſe gardens is the canal the conſtruction of which Macrizi attributes to the emperor Adrian. Ptolemy calls it the Trajan river: it is almoſt dammed up.

Having haſtily viewed theſe charming places, I returned, embarked at Boulac, and proceeded along the Nile as far as the iſland Raouda (*m*), which lies between Old Cairo and Giza. For the ſpace of a league the eye is delighted with immenſe fields of wheat, flax, and beans, intermingled with groves of dates, and hamlets. I alſo ſaw the mouth of a large canal, on the left bank of the river, before I came to Giza (*n*). Being

(*m*) Raouda ſignifies gardens, and the iſland has obtained this name becauſe it poſſeſſes ſome charming ones.

(*n*) I ſeveral times walked along the banks, and have followed

Being come to the projecting part of the iſland of Raouda, I went to ſee the nilometer which the Arabs call *Mekias* (*o*). This is a high marble column in the middle of a baſin, the bottom of which is on a level with the bed of the Nile. It is divided, to the very top, into cubits and inches, and has a Corinthian capital on which a beam reſts that ſupports a gallery. The waters enter the baſin through a conduit, when the inundation begins, and the criers examine the column every morning, and publiſh the daily increaſe through the ſtreets of Grand Cairo. When it is ſixteen cubits high, they open, with great ceremony, the mound which dams up *the canal of the prince of the faithful*, and the Nile ſtreams through the city amidſt the acclamations of the whole people aſſembled; but I will deſcribe this feſtival to you in a letter on that particular ſubject.

Before the Arabs had conquered Egypt, the nilometer ſtood in the little town of Halouan, five leagues ſouth of Foſtat, and oppoſite the ancient Memphis. " In the year ninety-ſix of

lowed its courſe for the ſpace of a league; it has various windings, and runs toward Libya. This was probably one of the canals which formerly ran to the lake Mareotis.

(*o*) *Mekias* ſignifies meaſure.

" the

" the Hegira (*p*), Ozama, governor of that rich " country, wrote to the emperor, Soloman Abd " Elmelek, that the Mekias of Halouan had " been thrown down (*q*). The Caliph com- " manded another to be built in the iſland that " lies between Foſtat and Giza. A hundred " and forty eight years after, this nilometer " fell, and the emperor Elmetouakkel had an- " other erected in the ſame place, which was " called the new Mekias." This nilometer ſtill remains. Nejem Eddin, ſon of Melek el Adel, who died at Manſoura, during the expedition of Lewis the Ninth into Egypt, charmed with the ſituation, built a vaſt palace near the Mekias, and, leaving that built by Salah Eddin, went and inhabited it. The ſlaves whom he entruſted to guard it were named Baharites, or Maritime, and diſtinguiſhed themſelves at the battle of Manſoura. The apartments and walls of this palace are now ruinous, but the baſin, owing to its ſolid conſtruction, and the column, which is well ſupported, though they have ſtood nine

(*p*) Elmacin, Hiſtory of the Arabs.

(*q*) It was natural to place the nilometer near Memphis, which, when the Arabs conquered Egypt, was the reſidence of its governors; perhaps there were two, one on each ſide of the river.

hundred

hundred years, appear to have received no damage from time.

If Murtadi may be credited, in his deſcription of the miracles of Egypt, the year that Amrou conquered this country the Nile failed in its annual increaſe, and the chief men came to ſupplicate the conqueror's permiſſion to follow the ancient cuſtom of dreſſing a young virgin in rich robes, and caſting her into the river. The Mahometan general firmly oppoſed the requiſition, and the Nile did not increaſe during the three months after the ſummer ſolſtice. But the alarmed Egyptians coming to ſolicit him again, he wrote to Omar, giving an account of what had paſſed. The caliph anſwered—"O Amrou, I approve "thy conduct, and the fortitude thou haſt "ſhown. The law of Mahomet ought to abo- "liſh ſuch barbarous cuſtoms. When thou "haſt read this letter, caſt the incloſed into the "river."

The incloſed letter contained the following words.

"*In the name of God, benevolent and merciful.*

The Lord ſhower down his benedictions "on

" on Mahomet and his family! Abd Allah " Omar, ſon of Khetteb, prince of the faithful, " to the Nile.

" If of thy own inherent virtue thou haſt " hitherto flowed in Egypt, ſuſpend thy courſe; " but if it be the will of Almighty God that " thou watereſt this land, we ſupplicate him to " command thee to do now as heretofore.

" Peace be with the Prophet, and health and " bleſſing upon his family."

The hiſtorian adds that no ſooner had this letter been thrown into the Nile than the waters roſe ſeveral cubits. Though Omar, who could burn four hundred thouſand volumes without remorſe, might have been very capable of writing this, and though it may appear to be his ſtyle and manner, I will by no means, Sir, warrant its authenticity, on the faith of Murtadi; much leſs the miracle which followed: the cuſtom, however, which ſtill ſubſiſts, ſeems to prove the Egyptians formerly ſacrificed a youthful virgin to the god of the Nile; for at preſent they make a clay ſtatue, in the form of a woman, which they call *The betrothed*, and place it on the mound of the khalig of the prince of the faithful, and throw it into the river previous to the opening of the dam. Is not this the remains

mains of a barbarous worſhip, which the Ottomans, notwithſtanding the horror they hold all kind of idolatry in, could not wholly aboliſh, being the ancient error of a ſuperſtitious people?

Having viſited the Mekias, and the remains of the palace of Nejem Eddin, I walked through the iſland, which is one vaſt garden, ſurrounded by the waters of the Nile. Walls, breaſt high, protect its banks from the impetuous current. On one ſide, Old Cairo, the water-works, and pleaſure houſes of the Beys, are ſeen; on the other, the pleaſant town of Giza, where there is a manufactory of ſal-ammoniac. The governor who reſides here exacts a tax from thoſe who viſit the pyramids out of curioſity.

Loſt in agreeable meditation, I entered a grove of tamarind, orange, and ſycamore trees, and enjoyed the freſh air beneath their thick foliage. A luminous ray here and there penetrated the deep ſhades, gilding a ſmall part of the ſcene. Plants and flowers ſcented the air, multitudes of doves flew from tree to tree, undiſturbed at my approach. Thus abandoned to the delights of contemplation, and indulging thoſe delicious ſenſations the time and place inſpired, I incautiouſly proceeded towards the thickeſt part of the

wood; when a terrifying voice ſuddenly exclaimed—"Where are you going? Stand, or "you are dead."—It was a ſlave who guarded the entrance of the grove, that no raſh curioſity might diſturb the females who repoſed upon the verdant banks. I inſtantly turned back, happy in not having been known to be a European. I afterwards underſtood the Beys go there ſometimes with their harem (*r*), and that any over inquiſitive ſtranger, who ſhould wander there at ſuch a time, would riſk the immediate loſs of his head. You perceive, Sir, how neceſſary circumſpection is in a country where the leaſt indiſcretion may lead to death.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(*r*) This name is given to the apartment of the women, but it is alſo uſed to ſignify the women themſelves.

LETTER X.

Of Heliopolis, the ancient city of the Sun; the ſtate in which it was when Strabo wrote. Of the obeliſk of granite ſtill ſtanding; the balſam ſhrub of Mecca, which was tranſplanted by a Pacha; and the fountain named Matar Ain, freſh water, which the Copts hold in great veneration, believing that the Holy Virgin came thither with her ſon.

To M. L. M.

Grand Cairo.

WHILE deſcribing the environs of the city, I ought not, Sir, to forget the ancient Heliopolis (*s*), formerly famous for cultivating the higher branches of ſcience, and the grandeur of its buildings. Geographers place it at ſome diſtance from the eaſtern angle of the Delta. Strabo (*t*) tells us it was built on a long ſlip of earth, raiſed by men, to ſecure it from inundation, and the place he deſcribes I found covered with ruins, two leagues north-eaſt of Grand

(*s*) i. e. The city of the ſun. (*t*) Lib. xvii.

Cairo, and three from the ſeparation of the Nile.

Heliopolis poſſeſſed a temple of the Sun, where, in a particular incloſure, the ſacred ox was fed. This ox was adored here by the name of Mnevis, as he was at Memphis by that of Apis. The credulous people ſuppoſed it a god; the prieſts, an animal moſt uſeful to agriculture, in a country where he aſſiſts in tillage, and afterwards in watering the earth, during ſix months of the year (*u*): but as ſuperſtition was their gain, by procuring them offerings, and rendering them the guardians of the oracles, they ſupported it with all their art.

The temple of the Sun was not the only one at Heliopolis; there was another, built in the old Egyptian ſtyle (*x*), with ſphinx avenues and ſtately obeliſks before the principal entrance. Nothing could have a finer effect than the coloſſal figures of marble, and high pillars of a ſingle ſtone, which were in front of the veſtibule

(*u*) When the waters of the Nile are low, oxen are employed to turn machines, with chain-buckets, which raiſe the water into reſervoirs, whence it is diſperſed over the grounds; for which reaſon this animal is preſerved at its birth, and it is forbidden to kill a calf in Egypt.

(*x*) Strabo, lib. xvii.

of

of Egyptian temples. While the aſtoniſhed eye contemplated theſe marvellous works, the imagination read the hiſtory of the god adored there, and the prince who had raiſed ſuch edifices, in the hieroglyphics with which they were overſpread. The temples of Heliopolis were ruins in the time of Auguſtus. Strabo relates that the marks of the rage of Cambyſes, who had attacked them with fire and ſword, were every where ſeen. Two of the four obeliſks which Sochis had erected in that city were carried to Rome (*y*), a third was deſtroyed by the Arabs, and the fourth remains on its pedeſtal. It is a ſingle ſtone, brought from the Thebaïs, perfectly poliſhed, ſixty-eight feet high above the baſe, and about ſix feet and a half ſquare. The obeliſk is in good preſervation, except toward the ſouth-weſt, where the granite is chipped to a certain height, and its ſides covered with hieroglyphics. This and one ſphinx of yellowiſh marble, thrown in the duſt, are the only remains of Heliopolis.

There was formerly a college of prieſts here, which obtained no more mercy from the barbarous Cambyſes than did the aſylum of Mnevis, where for more than a thouſand years they had

(*y*) Strabo, lib. xvii.

made aſtronomical obſervations, and by their labours had calculated the ſolar year of three hundred and ſixty-five days and ſome minutes, which alone will prove the extent of their knowledge in this ſcience. It was many years afterwards before the people of Europe could exactly determine the ſolar year; and Julius Cæſar, wiſhing to reform the Roman calendar, was obliged to employ an aſtronomer of Alexandria.

At Heliopolis Herodotus was chiefly inſtructed in the ſciences, and Egyptian myſteries; which were no other than thoſe profound branches of knowledge they thought prudent to conceal from the people under the veil of religion, and preſerved to themſelves by writing them in hieroglyphics, which themſelves only underſtood. Enlightened by what he learnt from them, and endued with an obſerving mind, this father of hiſtory was crowned at the Olympic games, and the nine books he compoſed were worthy the name of the nine muſes which they bore. And yet how many people, who have either not read him enough, or not at all, have dared to criticiſe and call him fabulous. For my own part, ſuſpending my judgment on the remainder of his hiſtory, I only can eſtimate the worth of what he ſays concerning Egypt, and with

with the utmoſt ſatisfaction I have found the manners and cuſtoms he appropriates to this country; except with ſuch ſlight modifications as changes of government and religion muſt neceſſarily have introduced. As to the monuments he has deſcribed, what remains proves he has not exaggerated, and demonſtrates the poſſibility of what is no more. Juſtice extorts this homage to a hiſtorian who, like Homer, was the painter of nations.

Heliopolis has not only the glory of having inſtructed Herodotus, but alſo of having taught philoſophy to Plato (*z*) who, from the ſublimity of his doctrine, has obtained the name of Divine. In this city Eudoxus, too, paſt thirteen years in the prieſts' ſchool, and became the moſt famous aſtronomer of his time. What now remains of all her monuments and all her ſciences? A barbarous Perſian has overthrown her temples, a fanatic Arab burnt her books, and one ſolitary obeliſk, overlooking her ruins, ſays to paſſengers, THIS ONCE WAS HELIOPOLIS!

At a little diſtance is the ſmall village of *Mataree* (*a*), ſo called becauſe it has a freſh water

(*z*) Strabo, lib. xvii.

(*a*) Named *Mataree* by the Arabs, otherwiſe *Ain Shams*, fountain of the ſun, becauſe it is near the ſcite of Heliopolis.

ſpring, and the only one in Egypt. Probably the ſtratum through which the waters of the Nile are filtered, in coming to this ſpring, does not poſſeſs the nitrous quality, ſo common to this country. Tradition has rendered it famous, which ſays that the holy family, flying from Herod, came here; and that the virgin bathed the child Jeſus in this fountain. The Chriſtians relate many miracles performed here, and come with great devotion to drink its waters for the cure of their diſeaſes; the very Mahometans partake of their veneration.

In this village was an incloſure where ſlips of the balſam ſhrub, brought from Mecca by a Pacha, were cultivated. When cut like the vine, precious drops were caught, well known in pharmacy, and which the eaſtern women uſe to give freſhneſs to the complexion, and fortify the ſtomach. Theſe ſhrubs, a foot and a half high, have ſlight ſhoots, and leaves like thoſe of rue. Belon, who ſaw them when he was at Grand Cairo, enumerated nine; he dried one of the ſlips, and proved it to be the plant known by the name of *xyllo balſamum*, or balm of Gilead, which the caravans bring from Mecca. Its colour, he ſays, is reddiſh, with an inner bark of beautiful green; it has an odour which partakes

of

of frankincenſe, the leaf of the *terebinthus*, or turpentine-tree, and wild ſavory; and, when rubbed between the fingers, is aromatic, like the ſcent of the *cardamomum*. This precious plant is loſt to Egypt, where the Pachas do not ſtay long enough to think of any thing but the intereſt of the moment. It was not to be found when M. Maillet was conſul at Grand Cairo, and at preſent is ſcarcely remembered.

I have the honour to be, &c.

LET-

LETTER XI.

The hot baths uſed over all Egypt, and the manner of bathing, deſcribed; with obſervations on the benefits ariſing from them; on the practice of the women who bathe once or twice a week; and compariſons between theſe baths and thoſe of the ancient Greeks.

To M. L. M.

Grand Cairo.

THE hot baths, Sir, known in the remoteſt ages, and celebrated by Homer, who paints the manners of his times, have here preſerved all their allurements and ſalubrity; neceſſity has rendered them common in a country where perſpiration is abundant; and pleaſure has preſerved the practice. Mahomet, who knew their utility, has made the uſe of them a religious precept. They have been ſuperficially deſcribed by moſt travellers; but as the habit I am in of frequenting them has given me leiſure to examine

mine them attentively, I ſhall endeavour to be more particular and ſatisfactory (*b*).

The firſt apartment, at entering the bath, is a great chamber, in the form of a rotunda, with an open roof, to let the pure air circulate freely. A ſpacious alcove, carpeted, is carried round, and divided into compartments, in which the bathers leave their clothes. In the centre is a fountain, which plays into a reſervoir, and has a pleaſing effect.

When undreſſed, a napkin is tied round the middle; ſandals are put on, and a narrow paſſage is entered, where the heat firſt begins to be felt; the door ſhuts, and, twenty paces farther, a ſecond opens, which is the entrance to a paſſage at right angles with the firſt. Here the heat augments, and thoſe who fear to expoſe themſelves too ſuddenly to its effects ſtop ſome time, in a marble hall, before they enter. The bath itſelf is a ſpacious vaulted chamber, paved and lined with marble; beſide it are four ſmall rooms: a vapour continually riſes from a foun-

(*b*) I have ſeen the baths of the principal cities of Egypt; they are all made on the ſame plan, ſeldom differing, except in ſize; thus an exact deſcription of one will include the others.

tain

tain and ciſtern of hot water, with which the burnt perfumes mingle (*c*).

The bathers are not, as in France, impriſoned in a kind of tub, where the body cannot reſt at its eaſe; but, reclining on a ſpread ſheet, and the head ſupported on a ſmall pillow, they freely take what poſture they pleaſe, while clouds of odoriferous vapours envelop and penetrate every pore.

Having repoſed thus ſome time, a gentle moiſture diffuſes itſelf over the body; a ſervant comes, gently preſſes and turns the bather, and, when the limbs are flexible, makes the joints crack without trouble; then *maſſes* (*d*), and ſeems to knead the body without giving the ſlighteſt ſenſation of pain.

This done he puts on a ſtuff glove and continues rubbing long, and freeing the ſkin of the patient, which is quite wet, from every kind of ſcaly obſtruction, and all imperceptible particles that clog the pores, till it becomes as ſmooth as ſatin; he then conducts the bather into a ca-

(*c*) Perfumes are only burnt when it is the deſire of the perſons bathing. By mingling with the vapour they produce a moſt agreeable effect.

(*d*) *Maſſer* comes from the Arabic verb *maſſes*, which ſignifies to touch lightly.

binet,

binet, pours a lather of perfumed ſoap on the head, and retires.

The ancients honoured their gueſts ſtill more, and treated them after a more voluptuous manner. While Telemachus was at the court of Neſtor (*e*), "The beauteous Polycaſte, youngeſt "of the daughters of the king of Pylos, led the "ſon of Ulyſſes to the bath, waſhed him with "her own hands, and, having rubbed his body "with precious ointments, clothed him in rich "garments and a ſhining mantle." Nor were Piſiſtratus and Telemachus worſe treated in the palace of Menelaus (*f*), the beauties of which having admired, "they were conducted to mar-"ble baſins, in which the bath was prepared, "where beauteous ſlaves waſhed them, rubbed "them with odorous oils, and clothed them "in fine garments, and magnificent furred "robes (*g*)."

(*e*) Odyſſey, book iii. (*f*) Odyſſey, book iv.

(*g*) I tranſlate the words χλαινας ὐλας (ſhaggy mantles) furred robes, though I am ſenſible no tranſlator has ſo rendered them, becauſe it ſeems to me the poet intended to deſcribe a cuſtom which ſtill remains, in the Eaſt, of covering the bather with furred garments, when he leaves the hot bath, to prevent a ſtoppage of perſpiration, at a time when the pores are exceedingly open.

The

The room into which the bather retires has two water cocks, one for cold, the other for hot water; and he waſhes himſelf. The attendant preſently returns with a depilatory pomatum (*h*), which inſtantly eradicates hair wherever applied. It is in general uſe both with men and women in Egypt.

Being well waſhed and purified, the bather is wrapped up in hot linen, and follows his guide through various windings which lead to the outward apartment, while this inſenſible tranſition from heat to cold prevents all inconvenience (*i*). Being come to the alcove, a bed is ready prepared, on which the perſon no ſooner lies down than a boy comes, and begins to preſs with his delicate hands all parts of the body, in order to dry them perfectly: the linen is once more changed, and the boy gently rubs the callous

(*h*) Made from a mineral called *ruſma*, of a dark brown colour. The Egyptians give it a ſlight burning, then add an equal quantity of ſlack lime, and knead them up with water. This grey paſte will make the hair fall off in three minutes, without giving the ſlighteſt pain.

(*i*) Delicate people ſtop ſome time in the chamber next the bath, that they may feel no inconvenience by going too ſuddenly into the air. The pores being exceedingly open, they keep themſelves warm all day, and, in winter, ſtay within doors.

ſkin

ſkin of the feet with pumice-ſtone, then brings a pipe and Moka coffee (*k*).

Coming from a bath filled with hot vapour, in which exceſſive perſpiration bedewed every limb, into a ſpacious apartment, and the open air, the lungs expand, and reſpire pleaſure: well kneaded, and, as it were, regenerated, the blood circulates freely, the body feels a voluptuous eaſe, a flexibility till then unknown, a lightneſs as if relieved from ſome enormous weight, and the man almoſt fancies himſelf newly born, and beginning firſt to live. A glowing conſciouſneſs of exiſtence diffuſes itſelf to the very extremities; and, while thus yielding to the moſt delightful ſenſations, ideas of the moſt pleaſing kind pervade and fill the ſoul; the imagination wanders through worlds which itſelf embelliſhes, every where drawing pictures of happineſs and delight. If life be only a ſucceſſion of ideas, the vigour, the rapidity, with which the memory then retraces all the knowledge of the man, would lead us to believe that the two

(*k*) The whole expence of bathing thus to me was half a crown; but the common people go ſimply to perſpire in the bath, waſh themſelves, aad give three half-pence or two-pence at departing.

hours

hours of delicious calm, which ſucceed bathing, are an age.

Such, Sir, are theſe baths, the uſe of which was ſo ſtrongly recommended by the ancients, and the pleaſures of which the Egyptians ſtill enjoy. Here they prevent or exterminate rheumatiſms, catarrhs, and thoſe diſeaſes of the ſkin which the want of perſpiration occaſions. Here they find a radical cure for that fatal diſeaſe which attacks the powers of generation, and the remedies for which are ſo dangerous in Europe (*l*). Here they rid themſelves of thoſe uncomfortable ſenſations ſo common among other nations, who have not the ſame regard to cleanlineſs.

The women are paſſionately fond of theſe baths, whither they go at leaſt once a week, taking with them ſlaves accuſtomed to the office. More ſenſual than men, after the uſual proceſs they waſh the body, and particularly the head,

(*l*) Tournefort, who had taken the vapour bath at Conſtantinople, where they are much leſs careful than at Grand Cairo, thinks they injure the lungs; but longer experience would have convinced him of his error. There are no people who practiſe this bathing more than the Egyptians, nor any to whom ſuch diſeaſes are leſs known. They are almoſt wholly unacquainted with pulmonic complaints.

with

with roſe-water. There their attendants braid their long black hair, with which, inſtead of powder and pomatum, they mingle precious eſſences. There they blacken the rim of the eye-lid, arch the brows with *cohel* (*m*), and ſtain the nails of their hands and feet of a golden yellow with *henna* (*n*). Their linen and their robes have been paſt through the ſweet vapour of aloes wood, and, their dreſſing ended, they remain in the outward apartment, and paſs the day in feaſting, while ſinging girls come and dance, and ſing ſoothing airs, or recount amorous adventures.

The days of bathing are feſtive days among the Egyptian women; they deck themſelves magnificently, and, under the long veil and mantle which hide them from the public eye, wear the richeſt ſtuffs. They undreſs themſelves in preſence of each other, and their vanity extends to their very drawers, which in winter are made of ſtuffs inwove with ſilk and gold, and in ſummer

(*m*) Tin, burnt with gall-nuts, which the Turkiſh women uſe to blacken, and arch, the eye-brows.

(*n*) A ſhrub, common in Egypt, which bears ſome reſemblance to the privet. The leaves, chopped and applied to the ſkin, give it a bright yellow colour.

of worked muſlin. Ruffles and lace are unknown to them, but their ſhifts are made of cotton and ſilk, as light and tranſparent as gauze. Rich faſhes of caſſimire (*o*) bind up their floating robes, and two creſcents of fine pearls ſparkle amidſt the black hair that ſhades their temples; while diamonds enrich the Indian handkerchief with which they bind their brows. Such are the Georgians and Circaſſians, whom the Turks purchaſe for their wives. They are neat to exceſs, and walk in an atmoſphere of perfumes; and, though their luxury is hidden from the public, it ſurpaſſes that of the European women in their own houſes.

The exceſſive jealouſy of the Turks makes them pretend that, in this warm climate, where nature is ſo powerful, and women are irreſiſtibly prone to pleaſure, an intercourſe between the ſexes would be dangerous; they therefore abuſe the right of ſtrength, and hold them in ſlavery, though they thereby increaſe the violence of

(*o*) The wool of Caſſimire is the fineſt in the world, ſurpaſſing ſilk itſelf. The faſhes made from it coſt about five-and-twenty pounds each; they are uſually embroidered at both ends, and, though three French ells long, and one wide, may be drawn through a ring.

their

their paſſions, and make them ready to ſeize the firſt opportunity of retaliation: ignorant, no doubt, that, though free women may be won, ſlaves need no winning.

I have the honour to be, &c.

LETTER XII.

Farther accounts of the Egyptians, their private lives, food, occupations, amuſements, inclinations, morals, and the manner in which they receive viſitors.

To M. L. M.

Grand Cairo.

LIFE, Sir, at Grand Cairo is rather paſſive than active (*p*). Nine months in the year the body is oppreſſed by heat; the ſoul, in a ſtate of apathy, far from being continually tormented by a wiſh to know and act, ſighs after calm tranquillity. Inaction, under a temperate climate, is painful; here, repoſe is enjoyment. The moſt frequent ſalutation, at meeting or parting, is, *Peace be with you* (*q*). Effeminate indo-

(*p*) From March to November the thermometer conſtantly riſes from 23 to 36 degrees; in the other months it ſeldom deſcends lower than the ninth degree above the freezing point.

(*q*) Thus the Orientals ſalute each other. The Chriſtian religion,

indolence is born with the Egyptian, grows as he grows, and deſcends with him to the grave: it is the vice of the climate: it influences his inclinations, and governs his actions. The ſofa, therefore, is the moſt luxurious piece of furniture of an apartment. Their gardens have charming arbours, and convenient ſeats, but not a ſingle walk. The Frenchman, born under an ever varying ſky, is continually receiving new impreſſions, which keep his mind as continually awake; he is active, impatient, and agitated like the atmoſphere in which he exiſts; while the Egyptian, feeling the ſame heat, the ſame ſenſation, two thirds of the year, is idle, ſolemn, and patient.

He riſes with the ſun to enjoy the morning air, purifies himſelf, and repeats the appointed prayer (*r*). His pipe and coffee are brought him, and he reclines at eaſe on his ſofa. Slaves, with their arms croſſed, remain ſilent at the far end of the chamber, with their eyes fixed on

religion, which owes its origin to Aſia, has borrowed the phraſe. The prieſts, in the time of communion, at feſtivals, ſalute each other with—*Peace be with you.*

(*r*) "Oh, believers! before ye pray, waſh your face, "your hands, and arms up to the elbows, wipe yourſelves "from head to foot." *Koran.*

him, ſeeking to anticipate his ſmalleſt want. His children, ſtanding in his preſence, unleſs he permits them to be ſeated, preſerve every appearance of tenderneſs and reſpect: he gravely careſſes them, gives them his bleſſing, and ſends them back to the harem (*s*). He only queſtions, and they reply with modeſty. He is the chief, the judge, the pontiff of the family, before whom theſe ſacred rights are all reſpected.

Breakfaſt ended, he tranſacts the buſineſs of his trade, or his office; and as to diſputes they are few, among a people where the voice of the hydra chicanery is never heard; where the name of attorney is unknown; where the whole code of laws conſiſts in a few clear and preciſe commands, delivered in the Koran; and where each man is his own pleader.

When viſitors come, the maſter receives them without many compliments, but with an endearing manner; his equals are ſeated beſide him, with their legs croſſed; which poſture is not fatiguing to the body, unembarraſſed by dreſs. His inferiors kneel, and ſit upon their

(*s*) Harem is an Arabic word, ſignifying forbidden place. It is the apartment of the women, improperly, by us, called ſeraglio.

heels.

heels. People of diſtinction are placed on a raiſed ſofa, whence they overlook the company. Thus Æneas (*t*), in the palace of Dido, had the place of honour, while, ſeated on a raiſed bed, he related the burning of Troy to the queen. When every perſon is placed, the ſlaves bring pipes and coffee, and ſet the perfume braſier in the middle of the chamber, the air of which is impregnated with its odours; and afterward preſent ſweetmeats, and ſherbet.

The tobacco ſmoked in Egypt is brought from Syria in leaf, and cut by them into long filaments: it is not ſo acrid as that of America; and, to render it more agreeable, they mix with it the odorous wood of aloes. Their pipes are uſually of jaſmin, the end garniſhed with amber, and often enriched with precious ſtones: they are very long, and the vapour imbibed is, therefore, mild (*u*). The Orientals pretend, it

(*t*) *Inde toro pater Æneas ſic orſus ab alto.* Æneid, lib. ii. The epithet *pater*, which Virgil beſtows on Æneas, proves this great poet intimately acquainted with oriental manners, among whom the title of father is the moſt honourable they can beſtow; they are proud of it ſtill, and, on the birth of a ſon, quit their own name, and call themſelves *the Father of ſuch a one*.

(*u*) There are pipes fifteen feet long, and they are commonly five or ſix.

agreeably irritates the palate, while it gratifies the ſmell. The rich ſmoke in lofty rooms, with a great number of windows, that give a thorough air.

When the viſit is almoſt ended, a ſlave, bearing a ſilver plate, in which precious eſſences are burning, goes round to the company: each in turn perfumes the beard, and, afterward, ſprinkles roſe-water on the head and hands. This is the laſt ceremony, and the gueſts are permitted then to retire. Thus, you ſee, Sir, the ancient cuſtom, of perfuming the head and the beard, as ſung by the royal prophet (*x*), is not loſt. Anacreon, the father of the feſtive ode, and the poet of the graces, inceſſantly repeats, "I delight to ſprinkle my body with precious perfumes, and crown my head with roſes (*y*)."

About noon the table is prepared, and the viands brought, in a large tray of tinned copper; and, though not great variety, there is great plenty. In the centre is a mountain of rice cooked with poultry, and highly ſeaſoned

(*x*) Like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard; even Aaron's beard. Pſ. 133.

(*y*) Anacreon, Ode xv.

with

with ſpice and ſaffron. Round this are haſhed meats, pigeons, ſtuffed cucumbers, delicious melons, and fruits. The roaſt meats are cut ſmall, laid over with the fat of the animal, ſeaſoned with ſalt, ſpitted, and done on the coals; it is tender and ſucculent. The guests ſeat themſelves on a carpet, round the table; a ſlave brings water, in one hand, and a baſon in the other, to waſh. This is an indiſpenſable ceremony, where each perſon puts his hand in the diſh, and where the uſe of forks is unknown; it is repeated when the meal is ended. The cuſtoms of the Eaſt appear to be very ancient.

Menelaus, and the beauteous Helen, having loaded Telemachus and Piſiſtratus with gifts, gave them a hoſpitable banquet.

" And now when through the royal dome they paſs'd,
" High on a throne the king each ſtranger plac'd.
" A golden ewer th' attendant damſel brings,
" Replete with water from the cryſtal ſprings,
" With copious ſtreams the ſhining vaſe ſupplies
" A ſilver laver, of capacious ſize.
" They waſh. The tables in fair order ſpread,
" The glitt'ring caniſters are crown'd with bread:
" Viands of various kinds allure the taſte,
" Of choiceſt ſort and ſavour, rich repaſt (z)!"

The manner in which the ſon of Thetis re-

(z) Pope's Odyſſey, book xv.

ceived

ceived the Greek deputies, very much reſembled that in which the Egyptians treat their gueſts.

Achilles ſtarting, as the chiefs he ſpy'd,
Leap'd from his ſeat—
——The chiefs beneath his roof he led,
And plac'd in ſeats (*a*) with purple carpets ſpread.
——" Patroclus o'er the blazing fire
" Heaps in a brazen vaſe three chines entire:
" The brazen vaſe Automedon ſuſtains,
" Which fleſh of porket, ſheep, and goat contains:
" Achilles at the genial feaſt preſides,
" The parts transfixes, and with ſkill divides.
" Mean-while Patroclus ſweats the fire to raiſe;
" The tent is brightned with the riſing blaze:
" Then, when the languid flames at length ſubſide,
" He ſtrows a bed of glowing embers wide,
" Above the coals the ſmoaking fragments turns,
" And ſprinkles ſacred ſalt from lifted urns;
" With bread the glitt'ring caniſters they load,
" Which round the board Menœtius' ſon beſtow'd;
" Himſelf oppos'd t'Ulyſſes full in ſight,
" Each portion parts, and orders ev'ry rite.
" The firſt fat off'rings, to th' immortals due,
" Amidſt the greedy flames Patroclus threw;
" Then each, indulging in the ſocial feaſt (*b*),
" His thirſt and hunger ſoberly repreſt (*c*)."

(*a*) The French reads " beds of repoſe;" and the author adds, in a note, " Theſe were ſofas of the Orientals, which " ſerved them by turns as ſeats and beds." T.

(*b*) The French again reads " laid hands on the viands;" and the author ſays in his note, " No doubt they took it " with their fingers, as is practiſed at preſent." T.

(*c*) Pope's Iliad, book ix.

A poet

A poet of leſs genius than Homer would have ſuppoſed his ſublime deſcriptions diſfigured by ſuch minutiæ; but how ineſtimable are they to us! How do they teach us the ſimplicity of ancient manners! A ſimplicity loſt to Europe, but ſtill exiſting in the Eaſt.

After dinner, the Egyptians retire to the harem, where they ſlumber ſome hours amidſt their wives and children. A commodious and agreeable place of repoſe is luxury to them. Thus Mahomet, who neglected nothing that might ſeduce, acquainted with the wants and inclinations of men, tells them "the inhabi-"tants of paradiſe enjoy the ſweets of repoſe, "and have a place moſt delightful to ſleep in "at noon (*d*)."

The poor, having neither ſofa nor harem, lie down on the mat on which they have dined. Thus Jeſus Chriſt, at the laſt ſupper, ſuffered his beloved diſciple to repoſe his head upon his boſom (*e*).

It is cuſtomary in the evening to go on the water, or breathe the freſh air on the banks of the Nile, beneath the orange and ſycamore ſhades. An hour after ſun-ſet ſupper is ſerved,

(*d*) Koran, chap. xxv. (*e*) John xiii. 23.

conſiſting

conſiſting of rice, poultry, vegetables, and fruits, which are very ſalutary during the heats: the ſtomach requires theſe, and would reject more ſolid food. Moderation in eating is the virtue of the climate.

Such is the ordinary life of the Egyptians. Our ſhows, plays, and pleaſures, are to them unknown; a monotony which, to an European, would be death, is delight to an Egyptian. Their days are paſt in repeating the ſame thing, in following the ſame cuſtoms, without a wiſh or a thought beyond. Having neither ſtrong paſſions, nor ardent hopes, their minds know not laſſitude: this is a torment reſerved for thoſe who, unable to moderate the violence of their deſires, or ſatisfy their unbounded wants, are weary every where, and exiſt only where they are not.

I have the honour to be, &c.

LET-

LETTER XIII.

The paternal authority of the ancient patriarchs perfectly preſerved in Egypt; the manner in which the father of a family governs his children, and the reſpect paid to age.

To M. L. M.

Grand Cairo.

HISTORY places the infancy of human nature in the Eaſt: here paternal authority began, and here its rights are ſtill preſerved. A father enjoys all the titles nature beſtows; the head, the judge, the pontiff, he commands his family, terminates their differences, and offers up the ſacrifices of the *Courban Beiram* (*f*). Each family

(*f*) A Mahometan feſtival, when each father of a family offers up a ſacrifice, proportionate to his means. The rich immolate ſheep and oxen; the poor obey the command, by cutting the throat of a pigeon. This feaſt, held ſolemn by the Mahometans, happens ſix weeks after the Ramadan, and recalls to mind the Jewiſh paſſover.

Mahomet, unable to aboliſh ſacrifices, divinely authoriſed in the Eaſt, recommends them in the chapter of the Pilgrimage

mily forms a ſmall ſtate, of which the father is king; the members of it, attached to him by the ties of blood, acknowledge and ſubmit to his power. Before his tribunal their diſputes are brought, and his ſentence, terminating them, reſtores peace and order. The eldeſt holds the ſceptre, experience is his guide, except in what regards his houſehold regulation, in which he follows the law that cuſtom preſcribes.

The children are educated in the women's apartment, and do not come into the hall, eſpecially when ſtrangers are there. Young people are ſilent when in this hall; if men grown they are allowed to join the converſation: but when the Sheik (*g*) begins to ſpeak they ceaſe, and attentively liſten; if he enters an aſſembly, all riſe: they give him way in public, and every where ſhow him eſteem and reſpect. In the time of Herodotus theſe manners ſubſiſted in

age of Mecca; but, that he might ſanctify a cuſtom idolatry had corrupted, he commanded the invocation of God over the ſlain animal, and added theſe remarkable words: "God ac-"cepts neither the fleſh nor blood of victims, but is pleaſed "with the piety of thoſe who ſacrifice them." *Koran.*

(*g*) This title, which ſignifies elder, is given to the moſt ancient of the family; and alſo to thoſe who appertain to the law.

Egypt,

Egypt (*b*), and the deſpotiſm under which it groans ſerves to preſerve them. The neck of its inhabitants bows beneath a yoke of iron. Publicly to diſplay wealth would be criminal; whatever can excite the avarice of its tyrants is carefully concealed, and there is a fear even of ſeeming fortunate. Within the family walls, only, tranquillity and happineſs are to be found; and, as the union of its branches gives ſafety, the common intereſt joins with brotherly love to maintain harmony. The ſacred laws of nature, in their primitive purity, are here obſerved. A numerous poſterity often reſides under the ſame roof; the children and grand-children come and pay their common father a daily tribute of veneration and love: the pleaſure of being beloved and reſpected, in proportion as age increaſes, makes him forget he grows old; the content of his heart ſparkles in his eyes, and ſerenity ſmooths the wrinkles of his forehead; he is chearful and jocular; and, while his youthful deſcendents wear the moſt modeſt garments, he is

(*b*) Like the Lacedæmonians, who are the only people among the Greeks that pay proper homage to old age, the Egyptians give way to thoſe who are older than themſelves, and riſe from their ſeats when they enter. Herodotus, Euterpe.

decked

decked in the gayeſt colours (*i*). Happy in the boſom of his family, when on the borders of the grave, he perceives not the approach of death, and reclines to everlaſting reſt amidſt the embraces of his children. Long do they mourn his loſs, and each week ſtrew his tomb with flowers (*k*), where they recite their funeral hymns. The Egyptians have loſt the art of embalming, but not the feelings which gave it birth.

Among poliſhed nations, where the family is more ſeparated, age is not ſo much reſpected; nay, it is often diſgraceful. The ſilver haired ſire is often obliged to be ſilent in preſence of haughty youth, or aſſume the manners of a boy to become ſupportable. In proportion as the burthen of time is felt, and the pleaſures of life diminiſh, he beholds himſelf an incumbrance even to thoſe who, but for him, had never been. They refuſe him conſolation when he needs it moſt, and ſhut him from their hearts: the cold hand of age withers his faculties, which the

(*i*) The brighteſt colours are reſerved for the aged in Egypt, and the youth of corrupted manners, only, are audacious enough to wear ſumptuous habits.

(*k*) To ſtrew odoriferous plants over, and recite prayers, at the tomb of relations, is a cuſtom in Egypt.

kindly

kindly flame of filial love warms not. In ſuch nations, the grey-haired, feeling father, dies long before he is carried to the grave.

Let us draw a veil over a picture which, thank heaven, is not univerſal. I was impelled to make the parallel by the affecting ſcenes I here each day witneſs, where the reverend patriarch, with his beard floating on his breaſt, ſmiles, in frigid age, on his grand-children, who approach him with their careſſes. He beholds four generations eager to pay him all filial duty, and his heart expands; he delights in life to its laſt moment. Yes, Sir, theſe people have, in ignorance, preſerved the ſimplicity of ancient manners; they know not our arts and ſciences, but the ſweeteſt ſenſations of nature, which books teach not, they know, revere, and enjoy.

What I have ſaid might be ſupported by a thouſand examples. I will ſelect only one which is well known. When M. Maillet was conſul (*l*) at Grand Cairo, the Jeſuits perſuaded the court of France to ſend for Coptic children to Paris (*m*), and there educate them in the Catholic faith, that they might return and convert

(*l*) About a hundred years ago.

(*m*) Copts are the ancient inhabitants of Egypt, and Jacobine Chriſtians; I ſhall ſpeak more fully of them hereafter.

their heretical nation. Money and promiſes obtained the conſent of ſome fathers, extremely poor; but, when the time of ſeparation came, paternal tenderneſs revived in all its force, and they rather choſe to remain wretched than to purchaſe eaſe by a ſacrifice too painful to the heart.

I have the honour to be, &c.

LET-

LETTER XIV.

An account of the Almai, or Egyptian Improviſatore, their education, dancing, muſic, and the paſſionate delight the natives take in theſe actreſſes.

To M. L. M.

Grand Cairo.

EGYPT, Sir, as well as Italy, has her improviſatore, called Almai, or Learned; which title they obtain by being more carefully educated than other women. They form a claſs very famous in the country, to be admitted into which it is neceſſary to poſſeſs a fine voice, eloquence, the rules of grammar (*n*), and be able to compoſe and ſing extempore verſes, adapted to the occaſion. The Almai know all new ſongs by rote, their memory is ſtored with the beſt *Moals* (*o*) and

(*n*) The quantity in Arabic and Latin verſes is the ſame, to which the former adds the various meaſure and rhime of the French. Theſe advantages cannot unite, except when a language is well fixed.

(*o*) Elegiac ſongs which bewail the death of a hero, or the

and tales, they are preſent at all feſtivals, and are the chief ornament of banquets. They place them in a raiſed orcheſtra, or pulpit, where they ſing during the feaſt, after which they deſcend, and form dances, which no way reſemble ours. They are pantomimes that repreſent the common incidents of life. Love is their uſual ſubject. The ſuppleneſs of theſe dancers' bodies is inconceivable, and the flexibility of their features, which take impreſſions characteriſtic of the parts they play at will, aſtoniſhing. The

diſaſters of love. Abulfeda has preſerved the concluſion of a moal, ſung by Ommia over the cavity in which his kinſmen had been thrown, after the defeat of Beder.

Have I yet not wept enough over the noble ſons of the princes of Mecca?

I beheld their broken bones, and, like the turtle in the deep receſs of the foreſt, filled the air with my lamentations.

Proſtrate on earth, unfortunate mothers, mingle your ſighs with my tears.

And ye, who follow their obſequies, ſing dirges, ye wives, interrupted by your groans.

What happened to the princes of the people at Beder, the chiefs of tribes?

The aged and the youthful warrior, there, lay naked and lifeleſs.

How is the vale of Mecca changed?

Theſe deſolate plains, theſe wilderneſſes, ſeem to partake my grief.

Vie de Mahomet, par Savary, p. 83.

inde-

indecency of their attitudes is often exceſſive; each look, each geſture, ſpeaks; and in a manner ſo forcible as not poſſibly to be miſunderſtood. They throw aſide modeſty with their veils. When they begin to dance, a long and very light ſilk robe floats on the ground, negligently girded by a ſaſh; long black hair, perfumed, and in treſſes, deſcends over their ſhoulders; the ſhift, tranſparent as gauſe, ſcarcely conceals the ſkin: as the action proceeds, the various forms and contours the body can aſſume ſeem progreſſive; the ſound of the flute, the caſtanets, the tambour de baſque, and cymbals, regulate, increaſe, or ſlacken, their ſteps. Words, adapted to ſuch like ſcenes, inflame them more, till they appear intoxicated, and become frantic bacchantes. Forgetting all reſerve, they then wholly abandon themſelves to the diſorder of their ſenſes, while an indelicate people, who wiſh nothing ſhould be left to the imagination, redouble their applauſe.

Theſe Almai are admitted into all harems; they teach the women the new airs, recount amorous tales, and recite poems, in their preſence, which are intereſting by being pictures of their own manners. They learn them the myſteries of their art, and inſtruct them in laſcivious dances. The minds of theſe women are culti-

vated, their converſation agreeable, they ſpeak their language with purity, and, habitually addicting themſelves to poetry, learn the moſt winning and ſonorous modes of expreſſion. Their recital is very graceful; when they ſing, nature is their only guide: ſome of the airs I have heard from them were gay, and in a light and lively meaſure, like ſome of ours; but their excellence is moſt ſeen in the pathetic. When they rehearſe a moal, in the manner of the ancient tragic ballad, by dwelling upon affecting and plaintive tones, they inſpire melancholy, which inſenſibly augments, till it melts in tears. The very Turks, enemies as they are to the arts, the Turks themſelves, paſs whole nights in liſtening to them. Two people ſing together ſometimes, but, like their orcheſtra, they are always in uniſon: accompaniments, in muſic, are only for enlightened nations; who, while melody charms the ear, wiſh to have the mind employed by a juſt and inventive modulation. Nations, on the contrary, whoſe feelings are oftener appealed to than their underſtanding, little capable of catching the fleeting beauties of harmony, delight in thoſe ſimple ſounds which immediately attack the heart, without calling in the aid of reflection to increaſe ſenſibility.

The

The Iſraelites, to whom Egyptian manners, by long dwelling in Egypt, were become natural, alſo had their Almai. At Jeruſalem, as at Cairo, it ſeems, they gave the women leſſons. St. Mark relates a fact which proves the power of the Oriental dance over the heart of man (*p*).

" And when a convenient day was come, that " Herod on his birth-day made a ſupper to his " lords, high captains, and chief eſtates of Ga- " lilee;

" And when the daughter of the ſaid Hero- " dias came in, and danced, and pleaſed Herod, " and them that ſat with him, the king ſaid un- " to the damſel, Aſk of me whatſoever thou " wilt, and I will give it thee.

" And he ſware unto her, Whatſoever thou " ſhalt aſk of me, I will give it thee, unto the " half of my kingdom.

" And ſhe went forth, and ſaid unto her mo- " ther, What ſhall I aſk, and ſhe ſaid, The " head of John the Baptiſt.

" And ſhe came in ſtraightway with haſte un- " to the king, and aſked, ſaying, I will that " thou give me by and by in a charger the head " of John the Baptiſt.

(*p*) St. Mark, chap. vi. ver. 21.

"And immediately the king ſent an execu-
"tioner, and commanded his head to be brought
"and he went and beheaded him in the priſon."

The Almai are preſent at marriage ceremonies, and precede the bride, playing on inſtruments. They alſo accompany funerals, at which they ſing dirges, utter groans and lamentations, and imitate every mark of grief and deſpair. Their price is high, and they ſeldom attend any but wealthy people, and great lords.

I was lately invited to a ſplendid ſupper, which a rich Venetian merchant gave the receiver-general of the finances of Egypt. The Almai ſung various airs during the banquet, and afterwards the praiſes of the principal gueſts. I was moſt pleaſed by an ingenious allegory, in which Cupid was the ſuppoſed interlocutor. There was play after ſupper, and I perceived handfuls of ſequins were occaſionally ſent to the ſingers. This feſtival brought them fifty guineas at leaſt; they are not, however, always ſo well paid.

The common people have their Almai, alſo, who are a ſecond order of theſe women, imitators of the firſt; but have neither their elegance, grace, nor knowledge. They are ſeen every where; the public ſquares and walks round

Grand

Grand Cairo abound with them; the populace require ideas to be conveyed with ſtill leſs diſguiſe; decency therefore will not permit me to deſcribe the licentiouſneſs of their motions and poſtures, of which no idea can be formed but by ſeeing. The Indian *Bayadieres* are exemplarily modeſt, when compared to the dancing girls of the Egyptians. This, Sir, is the principal diverſion of theſe people, and in which they greatly delight.

I have the honour to be, &c.

LET-

LETTER XV.

The private life of the Egyptian women, their inclinations, morals, employments, pleaſures, the manner in which they educate their children, and their cuſtom of weeping over the tombs of their kindred, after having ſtrewed them with flowers and odoriferous plants.

To M. L. M.

Grand Cairo.

I HAVE already, Sir, deſcribed the mode of life of the men, but have ſaid little concerning that of the women. This Oriental reſerve will not pleaſe a European (*q*); I will, therefore, endeavour to give you a general idea of female manners in this country.

(*q*) The Egyptians never mention their wives in converſation; or, if obliged to ſpeak of them, they ſay the mother of ſuch a perſon, the miſtreſs of the houſe, &c. Good manners will not permit the viſitor to aſk, How does your wife do, Sir? But, in imitation of their reſerve, it is neceſſary to ſay, How does the mother of ſuch a perſon do? And this they think an inſult unleſs aſked by a kinſman, or an intimate friend. This I relate as perfectly characteriſtic of Eaſtern jealouſy.

In

In Europe, women act parts of great conſequence, and often reign ſovereigns on the world's vaſt theatre; they influence manners and morals, and decide on the moſt important events; the fate of nations is frequently in their hands. How different in Egypt, where they are bowed down by the fetters of ſlavery, condemned to ſervitude, and have no influence in public affairs. Their empire is confined within the walls of the harem. There are their graces and charms entombed: the circle of their life extends not beyond their own family and domeſtic duties (*r*).

Their firſt care is to educate their children, and a numerous poſterity is their moſt fervent wiſh; public reſpect and the love of their huſbands are annexed to fruitfulneſs. This is even the prayer of the poor, who earns his bread by the ſweat of his brow; and, did not adoption alleviate grief, when nature is unkind, a barren woman would be inconſolable. The mother daily ſuckles her child, whoſe infant ſmiles, added to frequent pregnancy, recompenſes all the cares and pains they incurred. Milk diſ-

(*r*) The compiler Pomponius Mela pretends women do the out-door buſineſs, in Egypt, and men that of the houſehold. Every writer who has been in this country diſproves the opinion.

eaſes,

eaſes, and thoſe maladies which dry up the juices of the youthful wife, who ſends her offspring to be nurtured by a ſtranger, are here unknown. That mothers ſhould ſuckle their young is a law as ancient as the world; it is expreſsly commanded by Mahomet. "Let mothers ſuckle "their children full two years, if the child does "not quit the breaſt; but ſhe ſhall be permitted "to wean it with the conſent of her huſband (*s*)." Ulyſſes, in the Elyſian fields, beholds his mother, his tender mother, there, who had fed him with her milk and nurtured him in infancy (*t*).

When obliged by circumſtances to take a nurſe, they do not treat her as a ſtranger; ſhe becomes one of the family, and paſſes her days amidſt the children ſhe has ſuckled, by whom ſhe is cheriſhed and honoured as a ſecond mother.

Racine, who poſſeſſed not only genius but all the knowledge neceſſary to render genius conſpicuous, ſtored with the learning of the fineſt works of Greece, and well acquainted with oriental manners, gives Phœdra her nurſe as her ſole confidante. The wretched queen, infected by a guilty paſſion ſhe could not conquer,

(*s*) Koran. (*t*) Odyſſey, book xxiii.

while

while the fatal ſecret oppreſſed a heart that durſt not unload itſelf, could not reſolve to ſpeak her thoughts to the tender Œnone, till the latter had ſaid.

Cruelle, quand ma foi vous a-t-elle déçue?
Songez-vous, qu'en naiſſant, mes bras vous ont reçue?

When, cruel queen, by me were you deceived?
Did I not firſt receive you in theſe arms?

The harem is the cradle and ſchool of infancy. The new-born feeble being is not there ſwaddled and filleted up in a ſwathe, the ſource of a thouſand diſeaſes. Laid naked on a mat, expoſed in a vaſt chamber to the pure air, he breathes freely, and with his delicate limbs ſprawls at pleaſure. The new element in which he is to live is not entered with pain and tears. Daily bathed beneath his mother's eye, he grows apace; free to act, he tries his coming powers, rolls, crawls, riſes, and, ſhould he fall, cannot much hurt himſelf, on the carpet, or mat, which covers the floor (*u*).

He is not baniſhed his father's houſe when

(*u*) The rooms are paved with large flag ſtones, waſhed once a week, and covered in ſummer with a reed mat, of artful workmanſhip, and a carpet in winter,

ſeven

ſeven years old, and ſent to college with the loſs of health and innocence; he does not, 'tis true, acquire much learning; he perhaps can only read and write; but he is healthy, robuſt, fears God, reſpects old age, has filial piety, and delights in hoſpitality; which virtues, continually practiſed in his family, remain deeply engraven in his heart.

The daughter's education is the ſame. Whalebone and buſks, which martyr European girls, they know not; they run naked or only covered with a ſhift, till ſix years old, and the dreſs they afterwards wear confines none of their limbs, but ſuffers the body to take its true form, and nothing is more uncommon than ricketty children, and crooked people. Man riſes in all his majeſty, and woman diſplays every charm of perſon, in the Eaſt. In Georgia, and Greece, thoſe fine marking outlines, thoſe admirable forms which the Creator gave the chief of his works are beſt perſerved. Apelles would ſtill find models worthy of his pencil there.

The care of their children does not wholly employ the women; every other domeſtic concern is theirs: they overlook their houſehold, and do not think themſelves debaſed by preparing, themſelves, their own food, and that of their

their huſbands. Former cuſtoms, ſtill ſubſiſting, render theſe cares duties. Thus Sarah haſtened to bake cakes upon the hearth, when angels viſited Abraham, who performed the rights of hoſpitality. Menelaus thus entreats the departing Telemachus:—

" Yet ſtay, my friends, and in your chariot take
" The nobleſt preſents that our love can make;
" Mean-time, commit we to our women's care
" Some choice domeſtic viands to prepare (*x*)."

Subject to the immutable laws by which cuſtom governs the Eaſt, the women do not aſſociate with men, not even at table (*y*), where the union of ſexes produces mirth, and wit, and makes food more ſweet. When the great incline to dine with one of their wives, ſhe is informed, prepares the apartment, perfumes it with precious eſſences, procures the moſt delicate viands, and receives her lord with the utmoſt attention and reſpect. Among the common people, the women uſually ſtand, or ſit in a corner of the room, while the huſband dines,

(*x*) Pope's Odyſſey, book xv.

(*y*) Sarah, who prepared the dinner for Abraham and his gueſts, ſat not at table, but remained in her tent.

often

often hold the baſon for him to waſh, and ſerve him at table (z). Cuſtoms like theſe, which the Europeans rightly call barbarous, and exclaim againſt with juſtice, appear ſo natural here, that they do not ſuſpect it can be otherwiſe elſewhere. Such is the power of habit over man: what for ages has been he ſuppoſes a law of nature.

Though thus employed, the Egyptian women have much leiſure, which they ſpend among their ſlaves, embroidering ſaſhes, making veils, tracing deſigns to decorate their ſofas, and in ſpinning. Such Homer painted the women of his times.

" But not as yet the fatal news had ſpread
" To fair Andromache, of Hector dead;
" As yet no meſſenger had told his fate,
" Nor e'en his ſtay without the Scæan gate.
" Far in the cloſe receſſes of the dome,
" Penſive ſhe ply'd the melancholy loom;
" A growing work employed her ſecret hours,
" Confus'dly gay with intermingled flow'rs.
" Her fair-hair'd handmaids heat the brazen urn,
" The bath preparing for her Lord's return (a)."

(z) I lately dined with an Italian, who had married an Egyptian woman, and aſſumed their manners, having lived here long. His wife and ſiſter-in-law ſtood in my preſence, and it was with difficulty I prevailed on them to ſit at table with us, where they were extremely timid and diſconcerted.

(a) Pope's Iliad, book xxii.

Telemachus,

Telemachus, ſeeing Penelope ſpeak to the ſuitors on affairs to which he thought her incompetent, ſays—

"O royal mother! ever-honoured name!
"Permit me (cries Telemachus) to claim
"A ſon's juſt right. No Grecian prince but I
"Has pow'r this bow to grant, or to deny.
"Of all that Ithaca's rough hills contain,
"And all wide Elis' courſer-breeding plain,
"To me alone my father's arms deſcend;
"And mine alone they are to give or lend.
"Retire, oh queen! thy houſehold taſk reſume,
"Tend, with thy maids, the labours of the loom;
"The bow, the darts, and arms of chivalry,
"Theſe cares to man belong, and moſt to me."

Pope's Odyſſey, book xxi.

The queen, far from being offended at this freedom, retired, admiring the manly wiſdom of her ſon.

Labour has its relaxations; pleaſure is not baniſhed the harem. The nurſe recounts the hiſtory of paſt times, with a feeling which her hearers participate; chearful and paſſionate ſongs are accompanied, by the ſlaves, with the tambour de baſque and caſtanets. Sometimes the Almai come, to enliven the ſcene with their dances, and affecting recitals, and by relating amorous romances; and, at the cloſe of the

day, there is a repaſt, in which exquiſite fruits and perfumes are ſerved with profuſion. Thus do they endeavour to charm away the dulneſs of captivity.

Not that they are wholly priſoners; once or twice a week they are permitted to go to the bath, and viſit female relations and friends. To bewail the dead is, likewiſe, a duty they are allowed to perform. I have often ſeen diſtracted mothers round Grand Cairo, reciting funeral hymns over the tombs they had ſtrewed with odoriferous plants. Thus Hecuba and Andromache (*b*) lamented over the body of Hector;

(*b*) I will inſert the complaints of Andromache, and Fatima the daughter of Mahomet, that you, Sir, may compare them.

ANDROMACHE.

" And, Oh my Hector! Oh my lord! ſhe cries,
" Snatch'd in thy bloom from theſe deſiring eyes!
" Thou to the diſmal realms for ever gone!
" And I abandon'd, deſolate, alone!
" An only ſon, once comfort of our pains,
" Sad product now of hapleſs love remains!
" Never to manly age that ſon ſhall riſe,
" Or with increaſing graces glad my eyes:
" For Ilion now (her great defender ſlain)
" Shall ſink a ſmoking ruin on the plain.

" Who

Hector; and thus Fatima and Sophia wept over Mahomet. This cuſtom was not unknown to the

" Who now protects her wives with guardian care?
" Who ſaves her infants from the rage of war?
" Now hoſtile fleets muſt waft thoſe infants o'er,
" Thoſe wives muſt waft 'em to a foreign ſhore!
" Thou too, my ſon! to barb'rous climes ſhalt go,
" The ſad companion of thy mother's woe;
" Driv'n hence a ſlave before the victor's ſword;
" Condemn'd to toil for ſome inhuman lord.
" Or elſe ſome Greek, whoſe father preſt the plain,
" Or ſon, or brother, by great Hector ſlain,
" In Hector's blood his vengeance ſhall enjoy,
" And hurl thee headlong from the tow'rs of Troy.
" For thy ſtern father never ſpar'd a foe:
" Thence all theſe tears, and all this ſcene of woe!
" Thence, many evils his ſad parents bore,
" His parents many, but his conſort more.
" Why gav'ſt thou not to me thy dying hand?
" And why receiv'd not I thy laſt command?
" Some word thou would'ſt have ſpoke, which, ſadly dear,
" My ſoul might keep, or utter with a tear;
" Which never, never could be loſt in air,
" Fix'd in my heart, and oft repeated there!
" Thus to her weeping maids ſhe makes her moan;
" Her weeping handmaids echo groan for groan."

POPE'S ILIAD, book xxiv.

FATIMA.

" Oh my father! Miniſter of the moſt high! Prophet of " the moſt merciful God! And art thou gone? With thee " divine revelation is gone alſo! The angel Gabriel has,

the Romans; they had their funeral urns ſtrewed with cypreſs. How charmingly does the elegant Horace ſhed flowers over that of Quinctilius! How affecting, how paſſionate, is the ode he addreſſes to Virgil on the death of their common friend (*c*)! Among European nations, where

" henceforth, for ever taken his flight into the high hea-
" vens! Power ſupreme! hear my laſt prayer; haſten to
" unite my ſoul to his; let me behold his face; deprive me
" not of the fruit of his righteouſneſs, nor of his interceſſion
" at the day of judgment."

Then taking a little of the duſt from the coffin, and putting it to her face, ſhe adds,

" Who, having ſmelt the duſt of his tomb, can ever find
" odour in the moſt exquiſite perfumes! Alas! agreeable
" ſenſations are all extinct in my heart! The clouds of
" ſorrow envelop me, and will change the brighteſt day to
" diſmal night!"

Vie de Mahomet, par Savary, page 235.

(*c*) " Wherefore reſtrain the tender tear?
" Why bluſh to weep for one ſo dear?
" Sweet Muſe, of melting voice and lyre,
" Do thou the mournful ſong inſpire.
" Quinctilius—ſunk to endleſs reſt,
" With death's eternal ſleep oppreſt!
" Oh! when ſhall Faith, of ſoul ſincere,
" Of Juſtice pure the ſiſter fair,
" And Modeſty, unſpotted maid,
" And Truth in artleſs guiſe array'd,

" Among

where ties of kindred are much relaxed, they rid themſelves all they can of the religious duties which ancient piety paid the dead; but the reaſon why we die unregretted is becauſe we have had the misfortune to live unbeloved.

The Egyptian women receive each other's viſits very affectionately: when a lady enters the harem, the miſtreſs riſes, takes her hand,

" Among the race of human kind
" An equal to Quinctilius find?
" How did the good, the virtuous mourn,
" And pour their ſorrows o'er his urn!
" But, Virgil, thine the loudeſt ſtrain.
" Yet all thy pious grief is vain.
" In vain do you the gods implore
" Thy lov'd Quinctilius to reſtore,
" Whom on far other terms they gave,
" By nature fated to the grave.
" What though you can the lyre command,
" And ſweep its tones with ſofter hand
" Than Orpheus, whoſe harmonious ſong
" Once drew the liſtening trees along,
" Yet ne'er returns the vital heat
" The ſhadowy form to animate;
" For when the ghoſt-compelling god
" Forms his black troops with horrid rod,
" He will not, lenient to the breath
" Of prayer, unbar the gates of death.
" 'Tis hard, but patience muſt endure
" And ſoothe the woes it cannot cure."

FRANCIS's HORACE, book i. ode xxiv.

preſſes it to her boſom, kiſſes, and makes her ſit down by her ſide; a ſlave haſtens to take her black mantle; ſhe is entreated to be at eaſe, quits her veil and her outward ſhift (*d*), and diſcovers a floating robe, tied round the waiſt with a ſaſh, which perfectly diſplays her ſhape. She then receives compliments according to their manner (*e*). "Why my mother, or my ſiſter, "have you been ſo long abſent? We ſighed to "ſee you! Your preſence is an honour to our "houſe; it is the happineſs of our lives!" &c.

Slaves preſent coffee, ſherbet, and confectionary; they laugh, talk, and play; a large diſh is placed on the ſofa, on which are oranges, pomegranates, bananas, and excellent melons. Water, and roſe-water, mixed, are brought in a ewer; and with them a ſilver baſon to waſh the hands, and loud glee and merry converſation ſeaſon the meal. The chamber is per-

(*d*) A habit of ceremony, which covers the dreſs, and, except the collar, greatly reſembles a ſhift. It is thrown off, on ſitting down, to be more at eaſe, and is called, in Arabic, *camis*.

(*e*) Such titles as madam, miſs, or miſtreſs, are unknown in Egypt. A woman advanced in years is called my mother; when young, my ſiſter; and, if a girl, daughter of the houſe.

fumed

fumed by wood of aloes, in a braſier; and, the repaſt ended, the ſlaves dance to the ſound of cymbals, with whom the miſtreſſes often mingle. At parting they ſeveral times repeat, God keep you in health! Heaven grant you a numerous offspring! Heaven preſerve your children; the delight and glory of your family (*f*)!

While a viſitor is in the harem, the huſband muſt not enter; it is the aſylum of hoſpitality, and cannot be violated without fatal conſequences; a cheriſhed right, which the Egyptian women carefully maintain, being intereſted in its preſervation. A lover, diſguiſed like a woman, may be introduced into the forbidden place (*g*), and it is neceſſary he ſhould remain undiſcovered; death would otherwiſe be his reward. In this country, where the paſſions are excited by the climate, and the difficulty of gratifying them, love often produces tragical events.

The Turkiſh women go, guarded by their eunuchs, upon the water alſo, and enjoy the charming proſpects of the banks of the Nile. Their cabins are pleaſant, richly embelliſhed, and

(*f*) I mention theſe wiſhes, very ancient in the Eaſt, becauſe they are found often in the Holy Scriptures.

(*g*) I have ſaid *harem* ſignifies forbidden place.

the boats well carved and painted. They are known by the blinds over the windows, and the muſic by which they are accompanied.

When they cannot go abroad they endeavour to be merry in their priſon. Toward ſun-ſetting they go on the terrace, and take the freſh air among the flowers which are there carefully reared. Here they often bathe; and thus, at once, enjoy the cool, limpid water, the perfume of odoriferous plants, the balmy air, and the ſtarry hoſt which ſhine in the firmament.

Thus Bathſheba bathed, when David beheld her from the roof of his palace (*b*).

The Turks oblige the public criers to ſwear they will ſhut their eyes when they call the people to prayer, that their wives may not be ſeen from the high minarets. Another more certain precaution, which they take, is to chooſe the blind to perform this pious function.

Such, Sir, is the uſual life of the Egyptian women. Their duties are to educate their children, take care of their houſehold, and live retired with their family: their pleaſures, to viſit, give feaſts, in which they often yield to exceſſive mirth and licentiouſneſs, go on the water, take the air in orange groves, and liſten to the

(*b*) 2 Samuel, xi. 2.

Almai.

Almai. They deck themſelves as carefully to receive their acquaintance as French women do to allure the men. Uſually mild and timid, they become daring and furious when under the dominion of violent love: neither locks nor grim keepers can then preſcribe bounds to their paſſions; which, though death be ſuſpended over their head, they ſearch the means to gratify, and are ſeldom unſucceſsful.

I have the honour to be, &c.

LET-

LETTER XVI.

Narrative of a love adventure, which happened at Roſetta.

To M. L. M.

Grand Cairo.

THAT I may finiſh the portrait I have begun, I will relate a love adventure, Sir, which lately happened at Roſetta; and this will give you ſome idea of the ſtrength of the paſſion in this country. Facts are better than arguments to ſhow the manners of a people. I ſhall be careful that no indecency ſhall pervade the picture; but, if the colours are glowing, the nature of the ſubject muſt plead my excuſe.

Haſſan, an old jealous Turk, had married a Georgian girl of ſixteen, and appointed guards to watch her. But where is the guard ſo vigilant as love? This wealthy lord poſſeſſed fine lands near Roſetta; he had a magnificent garden a quarter of a league from the town, whither he permitted the youthful Jemily, his wife, to go, and take the evening air. Slaves of

of both ſexes always attended her. The men watched the walls, and ſtood centinel at the gates; the women waited on her within, where ſhe languidly ſtrayed among orange bowers. The murmuring ſtreams, the freſh verdure, the tender plaints of the turtle-doves which people theſe aſylums, but increaſed her melancholy. She plucked fruit, and ate, without appetite; ſhe gathered flowers, and ſmelt, without pleaſure. As ſhe was gravely walking one evening by the river ſide, veiled, and ſurrounded by her ſlaves, to go to her garden, ſhe perceived a European, who lately had arrived at Roſetta. His dreſs being ſo different from the Turkiſh, made him remarkable (*i*). The colours of youth were vivid on his cheeks, which were not yet tanned by the ſun, and drew her attention. She paſſed ſlowly, and let her fan fall, that ſhe might have a pretence to ſtop a moment (*k*). Her eyes met his, and the look went to her heart; the air, the ſhape, the features of the ſtranger were imprinted in her memory; and the impoſſibility of ſpeaking to, the dread of ſeeing him no more,

(*i*) Europeans dreſs as they pleaſe in Roſetta; but there is danger in wandering from the city in the European habit.

(*k*) Their fans are of feathers, half circular, in a wooden handle.

gave

gave her a painful ſenſe of ſlavery. Thus conſtraint kindled momentary inclination into impetuous paſſion. Scarcely had ſhe arrived among the arbours of her garden, before ſhe eſcaped from the crowd; and, taking one of her women aſide, in whom ſhe had moſt confidence, ſaid, "Didſt thou perceive the young ſtranger? "Didſt thou behold his bright eyes, and how "he looked upon me? O, my friend! My "dear Zetfa! Go, find him; tell him to walk, "the day after to-morrow, among the orange "groves without the garden, beſide the wood "of dates, where the wall is loweſt. Say, I "wiſh to ſee, to ſpeak to him: only bid him "ſhun the watchful eyes of my pitileſs keep-"ers."

The meſſage was punctually delivered, and the European unguardedly promiſed; which promiſe the ſight of approaching danger made him break. The ſlave, diſguiſed as a tradeſwoman, went a ſecond time, and aſked him why he had not kept his word. His excuſes were various, and he fixed a diſtant time, that he might have leiſure to reflect on conſequences. Reflection again vanquiſhed paſſion; the ſight of an impaled wretch cooled his fortitude, and he went not to the rendez-vous.

Zetfa

Zetfa returned once more, bitterly reproached him, deſcribed how ardently her miſtreſs loved him, and hated the old Haſſan, praiſed her charms, her beauty, and lamented the misfortunes of a perſon ſtolen from her parents, and ſold to a barbarian. The youth, ſeduced by her diſcourſe, ſwore that, on the morrow, he would be under the arbour an hour after ſún-ſet.

The beauteous Jemily, ever believing, though ever deceived, had been to the bath. Her black locks, a contraſt to the pure white of her complexion, ſprinkled with roſe-water, hung in treſſes that reached to the ground; her robes were richly perfumed; an embroidered ſaſh ſhowed her ſlender waiſt, and bound theſe her light robes, which, having none of the ſtiffneſs of art, took the contour of her body. Her mantle and her veil were thrown aſide; an Indian handkerchief, adorned with pearls, encircled her head. Though every grace of youth attended her, ſhe ſtill feared ſhe was not beauteous enough. Impatiently ſhe waited, ſometimes haſtening her ſteps, ſometimes as ſuddenly ſtopping, and at others, extending herſelf on the ground, rolled among, and cruſhed, the tender flowers. The leaſt noiſe made her ſhudder, and glance toward the appointed arbour. The ſun was no more

more ſeen; the bright ſtars appeared, and night, here ſo delightful, ſo magnificent, whoſe cooling preſence reſtores power to the languid body, and all its energy to the ſoul, had ſpread her veil over nature, and her dark ſhades over the bower where ſighed the amorous Jemily. Each breath, each ruſtling leaf, brought fear and hope alternately to her heart. Suſpenſe, that torturer of impatient love, gave her a thouſand racking doubts.

The hour of returning came, and a third time ſhe ſaw herſelf deceived. Fury takes place of affection; ſhe breathes vengeance, determines to have the life of the perjurer: but, having more love than vanity, hope and deſire ſoon extinguiſh wrath.—"No; he ſhall not die. Go, "go, my dear Zetfa, bear him the words of "peace; diſpel his fears, deſcribe my love, and "bid him come and learn its value."

Zetfa returned to the European, calmed his apprehenſions, and paſſionately deſcribed the tenderneſs of her miſtreſs, and the happineſs that awaited him. Incapable of withſtanding pictures ſo ſeductive, the imprudent youth once more promiſed; but, left to himſelf, the dread of an ignominious death once more made him violate his word. Patience itſelf has a period; that

of

of Jemily was long: nine months ſhe ſolicited a man whom ſhe had ſeen but a moment; finding in affection new excuſes; one means failing, purſuing another; ſtill unable to ſubmit to the loſs of him ſhe had taken ſo much pains to obtain. One evening, after ſhedding tears of bitterneſs, forgetting herſelf in the grove, and thinking only of her lover, whoſe image inceſſantly purſued her, Haſſan, tired of waiting, treated her harſhly. The charm was broken; ſhe retired, furious, to her apartment: but, though deſpairing Love breathed vengeance, yet the ſentence he pronounced he ſoftened.—"Once more, go," ſaid ſhe, to her faithful Zetfa; "to-morrow, at day-break, find the perfi-"dious European, and bear him theſe my laſt "words.——I ſaw thee, ſtranger, thought thou "hadſt ſenſibility, and my heart panted to be "thine. Nine months thou haſt deceived me; "perjury to thee is ſport. But, beware; thy "life is in my hands(*m*), and I am determined. "Haſſan will depart for Faoua on Thurſday; "he will return late, and I ſhall be in the gar-"den. Come and receive thy pardon, or a "ſlave ſhall bring me thy head. Jemily ſwears

(*m*) A Turkiſh woman may eaſily have a foreigner aſſaſſinated, or even publicly executed, if ſhe pleaſe.

"by

" by the Prophet, if longer neglected, to be re-
" venged."

Zetfa faithfully reported theſe words, and the European heſitated no longer. Death, with promiſed pleaſure, he preferred, made the ſlave a preſent, conjured her to calm the anger of Jemily, and faithfully promiſed he would be at the rendez-vous a little after ſun-ſet. He was not, however, without his fears; perhaps he was to be puniſhed for former perfidies. Could a Turkiſh woman find pleaſure in pardoning; or does wounded pride forgive? The day comes, and his fears increaſe: a thouſand wandering thoughts, a thouſand ſenſations, confound and diſtract his mind.—Depart he muſt, and the idea of a beauteous woman waiting for him enflamed the imagination, and veiled the danger. He armed himſelf, croſſed the rice-fields, ſtole along the wood of dates, and came to the wall which divided him from the beauteous Georgian. His heart palpitates; he looks, leaps the wall, and enters the garden. Two women, at ſeeing him, riſe, and appear terrified, while he ſtands motionleſs. The one—it was Jemily herſelf—held out her hand, and gave him courage. He approaches; bows profoundly; is kindly raiſed; a ſign is given, and the ſlave diſappears.

appears. "Stranger," ſaid Jemily, "why "haſt thou deceived me ſo long? Thou loveſt "me not."—"Pardon, beauteous Jemily; my "fears have detained me; but I am come to re-"pair my wrongs at your feet." She ſeemed as if ſhe would have continued her reproaches; but, taking the youth's hand, which trembled in her own, ſhe led him to an orange grove. The moon-beams ſilvered the foliage.—But here, without further deſcription, let us leave the lovers.

There ſeems little probability in an event like this, judging from European manners; and I might eaſily have Frenchified the ſtory, and made it credible enough; but the world would only have gained one error more—would have ſaid the Egyptians are like Europeans; without recollecting the immenſe difference of the licentious liberty of the ſex in one place, and ſlavery, as licentious in its effects, in the other. I am more ſatisfied with relating fact, ſhould it ſeem to want probability, than giving fable the appearance of truth.

I have the honour to be, &c.

LETTER XVII.

Excurſion from Grand Cairo to Giza, where the French merchants have a country houſe; the route from Giza to the pyramids, and a table of their heights, extracted from ancient and modern travellers, proving the great pyramid is ſix hundred feet high; and that in the time of Herodotus, before the ſand had accumulated round the baſe, its perpendicular height was eight hundred feet.

To M. L. M.

Grand Cairo.

YOU are ſurpriſed, Sir, I have not yet mentioned the pyramids, and expect a deſcription that ſhall clear and determine your doubts. This is the very reaſon of my ſilence; my delay aroſe from the deſire I had to obtain certainty, and ſuch information as ſhould ſatisfy your curioſity. One viſit was not ſufficient, and I am juſt returned from paying them a ſecond, in company with the comte D'Antragues, a French nobleman, whoſe deſire of inſtruction brought him to Egypt, and who, in addition to the qualities

lities we call amiable, poſſeſſes wit and learning.

We left Grand Cairo after dinner, proceeding through that part of it called Hanefi. The Nile was on our right, and the canal of the prince of the faithful on our left. The plain we croſſed reaches to Foſtat, and is interſected by lakes, cluſtering trees, gardens, and pleaſure-houſes, appertaining to the grandees. The moſt conſiderable is that of Ibrahim Bey, Sheik El Balad (*o*), whither he often takes his wives, who range in a vaſt encloſure of orange-trees and pomegranates, with a terrace, over which is a portico that looks down upon the river; here a part of their captivity is paſſed. A little farther a grand ediſice riſes, inhabited by derviſes; and which, ſcandal ſays, affords ſubject of conſolation to the beauteous priſoners.

Paſſing this plain, we came to the mouth of the canal of the prince of the faithful, and the water-works; and, traverſing a part of Old Cairo, embarked near the Mekias, and landed at Giza, where the French merchants have hired a handſome country-houſe. Here we paſſed the evening, impatient to continue our route;

(*o*) The title of the moſt powerful Bey, as I have before ſaid, ſignifying governor of the country.

but, previous to this, a preſent was neceſſary to the *Kiachef* (*p*), who promiſed us two *Sheiks* (*q*), to protect us from the plundering Arabs. This, formerly, was a voluntary gift, a mere mark of reſpect; it is now a tribute, which the governor lays on European curioſity. It originated with the Engliſh, who, returning from Bengal, never fail to viſit the pyramids. The folly and vanity of theſe Nabobs, who deal out their gold by handfuls, has made travelling more expenſive, and difficult, for perſons who have not governed the rich provinces of Bengal.

The preſent accepted, and the eſcort come, we left Giza about an hour after midnight, and ſcarcely had proceeded a quarter of a league before we perceived the tops of the two grand pyramids. We were but three leagues from them, and the moon ſhone on them with full ſplendour. They appeared like two pointed rocks, with their ſummits in the clouds, and the aſpect of theſe antique monuments, which have ſurvived nations, empires, and the ravages of time, inſpired veneration. The calm of nature, and the ſilence of night, added to their majeſty; and the mind, caſting a retroſpective glance over

(*p*) Governor

(*q*) Men of the law, or of authority among the Arabs.

the

the ages that have paſſed by theſe mountains which time himſelf cannot ſhake, ſhudders with involuntary awe. Peace be to the laſt of the ſeven wonders of the world! Honoured be the people by whom they were raiſed!

In the rich plains that ſurround them, fable has placed the Elyſian fields; their interſected canals are the Styx and the Lethe. The creations of mythology here gleam acroſs the mind; and the ſhades of her learned, her warlike, her poetical, her virtuous heroes, glide and ſhoot, appear and diſappear, at fancy's call. How highly is poetry indebted to theſe places; and how highly are they indebted to poetry; ſung as they have been by Orpheus and Homer!

We approach the pyramids, which, with aſpect varying, according to the windings of the plain we traverſe, and the ſituation of the clouds, become more and more diſtinct. At half paſt three in the morning we found ourſelves at the foot of the greateſt; we left our clothes at the door, where it is entered, and deſcended each with a torch. We proceeded till we came to a place where we were obliged to crawl, like ſnakes, to paſs into the ſecond entry, which correſponded to the firſt. We then aſcended on our knees, ſupporting ourſelves with our hands againſt the ſides; other-

wiſe we were in danger of ſliding precipitately down an inclined plane, the notches, or ſteps, of which did not afford certain foot-hold. We fired a piſtol about the middle, the fearful noiſe of which was long reverberated among the cavities of this immenſe edifice, and which awakened thouſands of bats, much larger than thoſe of Europe, that, darting up and down, beat againſt our hands and faces, and extinguiſhed ſeveral of our lights. Come to the top, we entered, through a very low door, a great oblong chamber, entirely of granite. Seven enormous ſtones, croſſing from one wall to the other, formed the ceiling. A ſarcophagus, cut from a block of marble, is placed at one end; it has been violated by man, for it is empty, and the lid has been torn off. Bits of earthen vaſes are ſcattered round. Beneath this chamber is another, leſs, where is the entrance of a conduit, full of rubbiſh. After examining theſe caverns, where the light of day never enters, and the ſhades of eternal night grow more thick and dark, we deſcended by the way we came, taking care not to tumble into a well (*r*), which is on the left, and which reaches to the bottom of the pyramid.

(*r*) This was known to Pliny — "There is a well in the "pyramid eighty-ſix cubits deep." Lib. xxxvi.

The

The air within this edifice, being never changed, is ſo hot and mephitic as almoſt to ſuffocate. When we came out, we were bathed in ſweat, as pale as death, and might have been taken for ſpectres riſing from the abyſs of darkneſs. Having eagerly breathed the open air, and refreſhed ourſelves, we haſtened to ſcale this mountain of man. It is compoſed of more than two hundred layers of ſtone that recede in proportion to their height, which is from four feet to two. Theſe enormous ſteps muſt all be mounted, to arrive at the ſummit; and this we undertook, beginning at the north-eaſt angle, which is the leaſt damaged, but did not accompliſh our taſk till after half an hour's ſevere labour.

Day began to break, and the Eaſt gradually aſſumed more glowing colours: we ſat enjoying a pure air and a moſt delicious coolneſs. The ſun-beams ſoon gilded the top of Mokkatam (*s*), and ſoon roſe above it, in the horizon; we received his firſt rays, and beheld, at a diſtance, the tops of the pyramids of Saccara, three leagues from us, in the plain of Mummies. The rapid light diſcovered, every moment, new beauties, the tops of minarets, of date-tree groves, planted round the villages and on the hills; and

(*s*) A mountain which overlooks Grand Cairo.

the flooding beams alike inundated mountains and valleys: the herds left the hamlets, the boats ſpread their ſails, and our eyes followed the vaſt windings of the Nile. On the north were ſterile hills, and barren ſands; on the ſouth the river, and waving fields, vaſt as the ocean; to the eaſt ſtood the ſmall town of Giza; and the towers of Foſtat, the minarets of Grand Cairo, and the caſtle of Salah Eddin, terminated the proſpect. Seated on the higheſt, the moſt ancient, the moſt wonderful, of the works of man, as upon a throne, our eyes, wandering round the horizon, beheld a dreadful deſert, the rich plains in which the Elyſian fields had been imagined, villages, towns, a majeſtic river, and edifices which ſeemed the work of giants. The univerſe contains not a landſcape more variegated, more magnificent, more awful; which more impels contemplation, more elevates the ſoul!

Having engraved our names on the top of the pyramid, we cautiouſly deſcended; for the deep abyſs lay before us; a piece of ſtone breaking under our hands, or beneath our feet, had caſt us headlong down.

Once more ſafe at the bottom, we made the tour of the pyramid, contemplating it with a kind

kind of terror. Looked at near, it ſeems compoſed of detached rocks; but, a hundred paces diſtant, the largeneſs of the ſtones is loſt in the immenſity of the ſtructure, and they appear very ſmall.

To this day, its dimenſions are problematical. Since the time of Herodotus many travellers and men of learning have meaſured it; and the difference of their calculations, far from removing, have but augmented, doubt. I will give you a table of their admeaſurements; which, at leaſt, will ſerve to prove how difficult it is to come at truth.

	Height of the grand pyramid.	Width of one ſide.
Ancients.	Feet.	Feet.
Herodotus -	800	800
Strabo - -	625	600
Diodorus -	600 ſome inches,	700
Pliny -	-	703
Moderns.		
Le Bruyn -	616	704
Proſp. Alpinus	625	750
Thevenot -	520	682
Niebuhr -	440	710
Greaves -	444	648

Number

	Number of the layers or ſteps.
Greaves -	207
Maillet -	208
Albert Lœwenſtein	260
Pococke -	212
Belon - -	250
Thevenot -	208

To me it ſeems evident that Greaves and Niebuhr are prodigiouſly deceived, in the perpendicular height of the grand pyramid. All travellers agree it contains, at leaſt, two hundred and ſeven layers, which layers are from four to two feet high (*u*). The higheſt are at the baſe, and they decreaſe inſenſibly to the top. I meaſured ſeveral which were more than three feet high, and I found none that were leſs than two; therefore, the leaſt mean height that can be allowed them is two feet and a half, which, ac-

(*u*) The ſteps are from two feet and a half to four feet high, not being ſo high towards the top as at the bottom. *Pococke's Travels*, vol i. p. 43.

The height of the firſt layer is five feet; but this height inſenſibly decreaſes to the top. *Proſper Alpinus*, cap. 6.

This pyramid has two hundred and eight ſteps of large ſtones, the mean height of which is two feet and a half, for ſome that I meaſured are higher, and were above three feet. *Thevenot, page* 242.

cording

cording to the calculation of Greaves himſelf, who counted two hundred and ſeven, will give five hundred and ſeventeen feet, ſix inches, in perpendicular height.

Obſerve that Greaves, Maillet, Thevenot, and Pococke, who differ in the number of ſteps only from two hundred and ſeven to two hundred and twelve, all have aſcended the north-eaſt angle, as the one leaſt damaged. I did the ſame, and counted two hundred and eight; but, if we remark that the pyramid has been opened on the ſide fronting the deſert, that the ſtones have been thrown down, and that the ſands which have covered them have formed a conſiderable hill, we ſhall no longer wonder that Albert Lœwenſtein, Belon, and Proſper Alpinus, who aſcended either the ſouth-eaſt or ſouth-weſt angle, leſs expoſed to the ſands of Lybia, found a greater number of ſteps: for which reaſon, their calculation, agreeing with that of Diodorus and Strabo, ſeems neareſt the true height of the pyramid, taken from its original baſe; and we have cauſe to believe it was at leaſt ſix hundred feet high. What Strabo ſays is almoſt proof poſitive. "About half way up, "on one ſide, is a ſtone, that may be removed, "which ſtops up an oblique entry that leads to

"the

"the coffin, which is depoſited within the pyramid (*x*)." This entry, which is now open, and which, in the time of Strabo (*y*), was about half way up, is, at preſent, not a hundred feet from the baſe. Thus the rubbiſh of the coating of the pyramid, and the ſtones dug out and taken from the inſide, ſince covered by ſands, have formed, in this place, a hill two hundred feet high. Pliny ſupports this opinion (*z*). The grand ſphinx, in his age, ſtood ſixty-two feet above ground; but its body is now buried under the ſand, and the neck and head only appear, which are twenty-ſeven feet high. If this ſphinx, which the pyramids ſhelter from the north winds that drift up the ſands of Libya, has, nevertheleſs, been covered thirty feet, imagine how great muſt be the quantity gathered on the north ſide of an edifice which intercepts theſe ſands, by a baſe of more than ſeven hundred feet in extent. To this we muſt attribute the prodigious difference between the accounts of the hiſtorians who meaſured the grand pyramid in diſtant times, and at oppoſite angles. Herodotus, who lived neareſt the time of its

(*x*) Strabo, lib. xvii.

(*y*) i. e. In the age of Auguſtus. (*z*) Pliny, lib. xxxvi.

foundation,

foundation, when its real baſe was bare, allows it to have been eight hundred feet ſquare (*a*), which I think very probable. This is alſo the opinion of Pliny, who ſays it covered a ſpace of eight acres (*b*). Shaw (*c*), Thevenot (*d*), and the reſt of the travellers, who have pretended this pyramid was never finiſhed, becauſe it is open and is not coated, are miſtaken. That it was coated, will be proved by the remains of mortar, ſtill found in ſeveral parts of the ſteps, mixed with fragments of white marble: and, if we read attentively the deſcription the ancients have given of it, every doubt will vaniſh, and truth be ſeen in all its luſtre. Let us examine a few of theſe paſſages.

" The grand pyramid was coated by poliſhed " ſtones, perfectly joined, the leaſt of which " was thirty feet long. It was built in the form " of ſteps, on each of which wooden machines " were erected, to raiſe the ſtones to the next." *Herodotus, Euterpe.*

" The grand pyramid is built of ſtones, very " difficult to work, but of eternal duration. " They are hitherto preſerved without da-

(*a*) Euterpe. (*b*) Pliny, lib. xxxvi,
(*c*) Shaw's Travels. (*d*) Voyage du Levant, page 255.

" mage,

" mage (*e*), and were brought from the marble " quarries of Arabia" *Diodorus Siculus*, lib. 1.

The hiſtorian thought the whole edifice had been built of ſtones ſimilar to the coating, which was of very hard marble. Had this coating been broken in part, he would have ſeen, underneath, a calcareous ſtone, tolerably ſoft.

" The grand pyramid is built of ſtones " brought from the quarries of Arabia, and is " not far from the village of Buſiris (*f*), where " people live who have the agility to mount to " the top." *Pliny, lib.* 36.

We ſee that Pliny, deceived by appearances, was under the ſame error as Diodorus; but the paſſage clearly ſhows the pyramid was coated. In fact, it would not have been ſurpriſing that the inhabitants of Buſiris could mount a building that had ſteps; but it was exceedingly ſo that they ſhould aſcend a mountain, the four ſides of which preſented a vaſt ſurface of poliſhed marble ſlabs, laid ſlanting.

I ſhall forbear being more particular, to prove that the grand pyramid was coated with marble: the fact is inconteſtable. That it was ſhut, is

(*e*) About the middle of the Auguſtan age.

(*f*) This village ſtill remains, is called Bouſir, and is only a ſhort league from the pyramids.

equally

equally true, as appears from Strabo; and that, by raiſing a ſtone, placed about the middle of one of its ſides, an entry was found, which led to the tomb of the king. To Maillet, who viſited this pyramid forty times, with all imaginable care, I will leave the honour of informing you what the means employed to open it were. I have twice examined it within, have twice aſcended to its ſummit, and cannot forbear admiring the ſagacity with which this author has unveiled the mechaniſm of that aſtoniſhing edifice. To this letter, therefore, I will ſubjoin his inquiries, and his plan, becauſe I can ſpeak only as he has ſpoken, and the merit of the diſcovery is his right. I ſhall only add a few notes, which I have thought neceſſary.

I have the honour to be, &c.

LET-

LETTER XVIII.

On the interior ſtructure of the great pyramid, its paſſages, well, and apartments; with the means employed, by the architects, to cloſe and render it inacceſſible; alſo the violent ones by which it has been opened: the whole extracted from the learned Maillet.

To M. L. M.

Grand Cairo.

'THE pyramid has not only been coated, and 'rendered entire without, but cloſed, alſo, and 'opened with violence; which I will undertake 'to prove, beyond all doubt.

'This violence is firſt perceived at the natu-'ral entry of the pyramid; whence have been 'taken, as may be ſeen with a little attention, 'ſome of the ſtones which once ſhut it, and 'which were enormouſly large. Theſe ſtones 'were placed above a paſſage which, by a ra-'ther ſteep deſcent, led to the centre of the py-'ramid, and to the chambers where the bodies 'of thoſe who built it muſt have been depoſited.

'This

'This paſſage is a hundred feet long, and be-
'gins a hundred feet from the baſe of the py-
'ramid. It is got at by a kind of mountain,
'of the ſame height, formed from the ruins
'of the pyramid itſelf. It is three feet three
'inches ſquare, and was wholly filled with
'ſtones, well fitted, of the ſame marble with
'itſelf. Above the aperture by which it is en-
'tered, we find an extent of nine or ten feet,
'in the body of the pyramid, whence ſtones
'of a prodigious ſize have been taken, as is evi-
'dent from the remaining ſtones. This alone
'would ſuffice to prove the pyramid has been
'cloſed; ſince theſe ſtones could only have been
'removed to find the mouth of this paſſage;
'or more eaſily to come at the ſtones which
'were within the paſſage, and which were faſt-
'ened to thoſe they were forced from. See A.
'Having forced theſe prodigious ſtones, and
'thoſe of the paſſage which were below theſe
'firſt, it was eaſy to extract the others, by the
'purchaſe they would obtain on the part that
'projected. It is ſuppoſed that, to make this
'more difficult, when the ſtones were inſerted
'in the paſſage, they were coated with an ex-
'ceedingly ſtrong cement, that they might fix
'themſelves more firmly to the ſides of the paſ-

'ſage, and become of a piece with the edifice; 'but, by ſuperior force, and hot water, poured 'in the paſſage B, the cement was ſoftened, 'and the ſtones detached, which were afterwards 'got out without much trouble. Certain it is, 'they found a method of extracting them, with-'out injuring the very ſtones which form the 'paſſage; they are ſtill as well poliſhed as at 'firſt, except at the bottom of the paſſage, 'where they have chiſeled, at convenient di-'ſtances, holes two or three fingers deep; which 'precaution was neceſſary, to facilitate the en-'trance and return from the pyramid. Were 'it not for this aſſiſtance, it would not be poſ-'ſible to deſcend the paſſage, without ſliding ra-'pidly to the bottom; or to return, without 'having ropes faſtened on the outſide.

'I hinted above, the paſſage was made of 'marble: I now add that the ſtones which form 'the four ſides are of the fineſt, conſequently 'the hardeſt, white marble. I own it is ſome-'what yellow, and has, no doubt, taken this 'colour, on the ſurface, from length of time (*g*).

'One

(*g*) It is its natural colour. At the foot of Mount Colzoum, on the weſtern ſhore of the Red Sea, is an immenſe quarry of this yellow marble; the ſandy plain which leads to

'One of theſe prodigious ſtones, which, as I 'have ſaid, were forced from the pyramid, above 'the entrance of the paſſage, is ſtill found there; 'and it is uſual for thoſe who viſit this illuſtrious 'monument, to get on it and eat. It is of the 'ſame marble beyond all contradiction; as well 'as thoſe which form the other paſſages. On 'this principle I have affirmed, the ſtones which 'cloſed the firſt paſſage I have juſt deſcribed, and 'even all the other paſſages of the pyramid, 'were of the ſame material; choſen, no doubt, 'preferably to all others, for its extreme hard-'neſs. This may be eaſily proved by raiſing 'the half of the ſtone, which ſtill remains, at C; 'where is the junction between the outward 'and inward paſſage. The inſide of the pyra-'mid is ſo dark and blackened by the ſmoke of 'candles and torches, which for ages have been 'burnt in going to viſit it, that to judge of the 'quality of the ſtones of the chambers and other

to it is called *Elaraba*, the plain of Carts, which name it no doubt obtained from the carts uſed to carry the marble to the Nile, whence it was tranſported by water almoſt to the foot of the pyramids. Herodotus and Pliny affirm, the ſtones with which they were coated were brought from the quarries of Arabia, becauſe that part of Egypt was then called Arabia.

'places incloſed in this wonderful pile, would 'be difficult; we only can ſee that their poliſh 'is extremely fine; that they are of the utmoſt 'hardneſs, and ſo perfectly joined, that the point 'of a knife cannot enter the interſtices between 'them.

'When they had emptied this firſt paſſage, 'and ended this painful labour, they came to a 'ſecond, ſtill more conſiderable. The taſk then 'was to extract the ſtones that filled this ſecond, 'which aſcended, towards the top of the pyra-'mid, with the ſame ſudden ſteepneſs that the 'other had deſcended: and alſo to find the be-'ginning of this paſſage, which I imagine they 'did, though the ſtone that cloſed it, fitted it ſo 'juſtly as to leave no indication of any aperture 'whatever. They only might perceive that it 'did not, like the others, extend over the top of 'the firſt paſſage; which they would diſcover, 'by ſounding, with the point of a knife, or ſome 'other inſtrument, with which they might pe-'netrate the cement, that united the four ſides 'of which the ſuperficies of that ſtone was com-'poſed, and which joined it to thoſe of the paſ-'ſage beneath. The entrance to this ſecond 'paſſage was ten feet diſtant from the further 'end of the firſt; the better to deceive thoſe

who

'who ſhould attempt to diſcover it. This ſtone 'was attacked firſt, which was no eaſy work; 'the place was confined, and it was neceſſary to 'lie on the back, and work above the head, the 'arms having but little force, and the body in 'continual danger of being cruſhed by a maſſy 'ſtone, that every inſtant might fall, which may 'be ſeen at C. The mallet and chiſel having 'conquered the reſiſtance of this firſt ſtone, 'which muſt have been keyed, or ſome way 'faſtened, another ſucceeded, which, gliding 'down, covered the mouth of the paſſage; and 'to extract which a different kind of labour was 'neceſſary. This they effected: but, another 'ſtill preſenting itſelf, they thought this mode 'too tedious, renounced it, and having prevent-'ed the deſcent of the ſtones, which followed 'and ſtopped up the mouth of the paſſage, they 'forced a way, forty feet long, and eight or ten 'in height and width, at D, through the ſtones 'that ſurrounded the bottom of the firſt paſſage. 'This forced paſſage (*h*) is at E. In ſome places

(*h*) It is unequal, crooked, and very different from the paſſages of the pyramid; which prove it has been forcibly effected. What muſt have been the labour to penetrate a maſs ſo enormous, and in a ſituation ſo confined, for more than forty feet!

'it is low and confined, in others a man may 'ſtand upright; this was a work of infinite la- 'bour. Afterward turning to the left, toward 'the ſecond paſſage, they took three or four 'ſtones out of its ſide, which made an opening 'from fifteen to twenty feet in extent at G. 'But it is neceſſary, before we ſpeak of the con- 'tinuation of this work, to obſerve that the ſtone 'which really cloſed this paſſage, where it com- 'municated with the firſt, exactly proportioned 'to the place, and entirely ſtopping up the 'mouth, has been removed, as I have ſaid: for 'the ſtone at the mouth of this paſſage at pre- 'ſent does not fit; but, on the contrary, leaves 'a void of five or ſix fingers at its top; which 'ought to be that much longer than its bottom. 'See letter F.

'Having broken and extracted the three ſtones 'at G, by which they came to the ſecond paſ- 'ſage, it was neceſſary to clear all the other ſtones 'away; not only thoſe which correſponded to 'this opening, but thoſe, alſo, which were con- 'tinued to an unknown extent. This was a 'difficult and tedious work, ſince only one per- 'ſon could be employed, in a ſpace three feet 'three inches ſquare. It might be ſuſpected, 'likewiſe, that, beſides the numerous ſtones

'they

'they ſhould find in this paſſage, they might 'come to an opener place, where there might 'be a long continuation of ſtones, again ready 'to ſlide down, and ſtop up the paſſage to the 'centre of the pyramid. To avoid which, in 'part, inſtead of breaking the ſtones one after 'the other, at G, where the paſſage had been 'attempted, and begun, they reſolved to ſuſtain 'the ſtones in the paſſage, and, by a prop, or 'ſome other means, to ſupport the ſtone above 'that they intended to break. Accordingly they 'began; and, attacking and breaking this ſuc-'ceſſion of ſtones, each ſuſtained by props of 'proportionate length, they continued the work, 'from ſtone to ſtone, without widening the ex-'tent of the paſſage, till they came to the end 'of it, and to an upper ſpace, of which I ſhall 'preſently ſpeak.

'It is proper to obſerve that, for the whole 'extent of this paſſage, great efforts were ne-'ceſſary to break the ſtones by which it was 'filled; the ſtrokes of the mallets they employ-'ed, and thoſe ſtruck on the chiſels uſed to 'accompliſh the work, have ſo much injured 'the ſides of the paſſage that, ſquare as it was, 'they have almoſt made it round: a certain 'proof they worked from top to bottom, and,

'conſequently, propped the ſtones in their places 'to break them; for, had this work been per-'formed at the opening made at G, that part, 'only, of the paſſage would have been diſfigu-'red, and the remainder, eighty feet in length, '(ſee letter H) from which the ſtones would 'have only ſlipped down to the vacant place, 'would have remained perfect; as in the other 'places, where the ſides are entire, quite to the 'chamber.

'Having arrived quite at the end of this paſ-'ſage, they found its upper part open, and that 'it had loſt a foot in depth; ſince it was only 'two feet and a half deep. This part, however, 'widened, on each ſide, a foot and a half; mak-'ing three feet, and increaſing the width to ſix 'feet and a half; thereby forming, on each ſide 'of the paſſage, two elevations, or benches, of 'two feet and a halfhigh, and one foot and a 'half wide. The paſſage continued, in the ſame 'direction, for the ſpace of a hundred and twen-'ty five feet, according to the meaſurement I 'cauſed to be made; others ſay a hundred and 'forty. At the end of theſe benches, and this 'paſſage, was an eſplanade, or platform, eight 'or nine feet in depth, and ſix and a half wide; 'like the ſpace about the benches.' This is in-

dicated

'dicated by the letter R, in the figure, No. 2, 'on a larger ſcale, which is given of this part 'of the pyramid. At intervals of two feet and 'a half, they have cut, perpendicularly, in the 'benches, from bottom to top, next the wall, 'niches (or mortiſes) a foot long, ſix inches 'wide, and eight deep. I ſhall explain their 'uſe hereafter. Theſe benches, and niches, 'which accompany the paſſage P, are ſhown at 'the letters Q Q. The ſides of the gallery riſe 'above the benches, twenty-five feethigh: for 'the height of twelve feet, the wall is perfectly 'equal; it is then narrowed by a ſtone, which 'projects three fingers; and, three feet above 'that, by another; at the ſame diſtance by a 'third; and three feet higher, again, by a fourth; 'all equally projecting. It is only four feet 'from this to the roof, which is flat, and near- 'ly the ſame width as the paſſage at the bottom 'of the gallery; that is to ſay, about three feet 'three inches. This elevation was neceſſary to 'the architect to place the ſtones which were 'to cloſe the paſſages. What I have ſaid of the 'narrowing of the gallery, at ſtated diſtances, 'is indicated by the letters S S Leaving the 'paſſage H, at firſt entering the gallery, an o- 'pening is found, on the right, in the wall:

'it

'it occupies a part of the bench, is almoſt round, 'and cut in the form of a ſmall door, of about 'three feet high, and two and a half wide. 'From this aperture is a deſcent into a well; 'of which, and its uſe, I ſhall ſpeak preſently. 'See I.

'Having once come to the gallery, it was not 'difficult to break the ſtones which filled the 'paſſage P; becauſe they were not only above 'the benches, but the greater width of the gal- 'lery left the workmen free to uſe beetles, and 'ſtrike, with eaſe, on the iron wedges, which 'they employed to remove and break theſe ſtones. 'Or they might begin with the laſt, which was 'eaſier to break than the others, becauſe they 'might ſtand upright in the paſſage, and ac- 'compliſh their purpoſe with greater eaſe. Hav- 'ing done this, and removed the broken ſtones, 'by examining the bottom of the groove, they 'would perceive that the firſt ſtones, with 'which this bottom was covered, to the extent 'of fourteen or fifteen feet (ſee L), did not croſs 'the benches; and would then eaſily remove 'them, one after the other. This place cleared, 'they would find a platform, ten feet in length, 'and equal in height, at the end of which was 'a continuation of the paſſage, which formed a

'triangle,

'triangle of fourteen or fifteen feet extent, at 'the entrance of the gallery. On a level with 'this platform, and to the left of the paſſage 'which led to the gallery, they would ſee a con- 'tinuation of the paſſage three feet three inches 'ſquare. This new paſſage was covered by 'the ſtones they had juſt removed; and they 'would eaſily divine it neceſſarily led to ſome 'ſecret part of the pyramid, and would reſolve 'to ſatisfy their doubts. This paſſage (ſee let- 'ter N) might eaſily be emptied of the ſtones by 'which it was ſtopped up; they having room 'to work, and to remove them, in a ſtraight 'line. They were broken in the open ſpace, 'at the entrance of this paſſage, which they 'found was a hundred and eighteen feet in 'length, and at the end of which was a vault- 'ed chamber.

'This chamber (ſee letter O) is ſeventeen 'feet and a half long, fifteen feet ten inches 'wide, and has a ſemi-circular ceiling. On 'the eaſtern ſide, there is a niche, ſunk three 'feet in the wall, eight feet high, and three 'wide; which, no doubt, was for a mummy, 'placed ſtanding, according to the cuſtom of 'the Egyptians. Probably, it was the body 'of the queen, whoſe huſband built the pyra-

'mid;

'mid; nor have I any doubt but that his body 'was depoſited in the chamber above, perpen- 'dicular to this, but about a hundred feet high- 'er (See letters O and D D). On entering the 'chamber O, the laſt ſtone, on the right hand, 'was bevelled, that is, ſloping at one end, which 'projected about three fingers; this had been 'purpoſely done, to prevent the ſtone, which 'was to cloſe the paſſage N, from entering this 'chamber: and, we have reaſon to believe, this 'cloſing ſtone had a correſponding bevel, that it 'might fit exactly and join the wall of the 'chamber, which anſwered to this entrance. I 'cannot leave this place without remarking a 'diſcovery I made in the upper part of the 'paſſage (*i*). To others, more able, I will 'leave the deciſion of what might have cauſed 'this accident: for my own part, I either think 'it the effect of an earthquake or of the ſinking 'of this enormous body, which may be more 'heavy on one ſide than another, or have a leſs 'ſolid foundation. I certainly ſaw no ſimilar de-

(*i*) A long and remarkable crack, at leaſt ſix lines wide, and ſtrikes at firſt ſight. It is on the ſide facing the Nile; and, perhaps, the part of the mountain, the foot of which is watered by the river, which filtres through the ſands, has given way a little, under the weight of this vaſt pyramid.

'fect

'fect in any other part of the pyramid, though 'I examined it with the moſt ſcrupulous exac- 'titude; particularly every part of the gallery, 'with a careful curioſity; and, as it was im- 'poſſible to introduce a pole through the wind- 'ing entrance, which it is neceſſary to go through, 'to come to the paſſage, I had ſeveral ſticks tied 'together, at the end of which lighted torches 'were fixed; theſe I raiſed as near to the ceil- 'ing as poſſible, and to the wall, without diſ- 'covering any defect. I only obſerved that the 'ſides were injured, in ſome places, and that, 'on the right, a part of the wall had been car- 'ried away above the narrowing of the gallery; 'which accident, no doubt, was occaſioned by 'the fall of ſome ſtone, in the cloſing of the 'pyramid, the manner of which I ſhall hereaft- 'er deſcribe, that, having eſcaped from the 'workmen, fell from the top of the ſcaffolding, 'and broke the part where it alighted.

'I muſt further ſay, that it is probable, they 'were perſuaded there was ſome hidden treaſure 'under this firſt chamber. This will be ſeen 'by a forced entrance that has been made, 'through which, croſſing ſeveral unequal ſtones, 'there is a way into the body of the pyramid, 'twenty or five and twenty paces deep. The

'ſtones,

'ſtones broken and removed from that place, 'at preſent, almoſt fill this chamber. The ſame 'attempts have been made in the chamber above; 'though, probably, in both places, the only re-'compenſe, for the infinite pains they had tak-'en in ſpoiling works ſo beautiful, was the 'vexation of having ſpent much time and trou-'ble to no purpoſe.

'The ſecret of this firſt chamber diſcover-'ed, nothing remained but to penetrate to that 'which incloſed the body of the king. They 'had no doubt but they ſhould find it on a level 'with the eſplanade, which, as I have ſaid, 'was at the high end of the gallery; and they 'imagined, with reaſon, it ought to be ſituated 'exactly over the firſt. In fact, at the end of 'this eſplanade, which, in fig. 2, is denoted by 'the letter R, they found a continuation of the 'three feet three inch paſſage, perfectly cloſed; 'ſee letter T. This they began to clear; and 'it is probable the cloſing ſtone was ſo firmly 'fixed that the labour of removing it was great. 'This may be ſeen, by a piece of the upper 'ſtone having been broken, to obtain a pur-'chaſe, no doubt, on the one beneath, that 'ſtopped up the paſſage. After many efforts, 'they removed it; and alſo effected the re-

'moval

'moval of a ſecond, and came to a ſpace ſeven 'feet and a half long. They wiſhed to proceed 'to the end of this paſſage; but, after theſe 'two ſtones, they found a third, which could 'not be drawn out, becauſe it was wider, and 'higher, than the aperture. This was the laſt 'refuge of the architect to deceive whoever 'might penetrate thus far, and prevent continu-'ing the ſearch for the myſterious chamber, in 'which, twelve paces diſtant, the body of the 'king repoſed, and his treaſures with him, pro-'vided any had been ſo depoſited. This diffi-'culty did not, however, miſlead the workmen, 'nor diſcourage thoſe who had undertaken the 'ſearch of the pyramid. The ſtone was attack-'ed with mallet and chiſel, and, after much 'time and labour, broken; for it was ſix feet 'long, four wide, and, perhaps, from five to 'ſix high: becauſe here we find a ſpace of fif-'teen feet high, which, after riſing eight feet, 'enlarges four, or thereabouts, toward the gal-'lery. This extenſion is denoted in the plate, 'fig. 2, by the &. It correſponded with an a-'perture in the paſſage, a foot and a half wide, 'which was two feet before the great ſtone, and 'the purpoſe of which I ſhall deſcribe preſent-'ly.

'At

'At the top of this ſpace, there was a hol-
'low a foot deep, and nearly the ſame in
'height, in the wall that every way cloſed the
'paſſage (ſee A A); which had been purpoſely
'made to ſuſtain powerful levers, or croſs
'beams, over which ſtrong ropes were thrown,
'that held the great ſtone by means of iron
'rings, and ſuſpended it in the ſpace Z, which
'it filled, till ſuch time as they ſuffered it to
'fall over the paſſage B B; that is to ſay, till
'the body of the king had been depoſited in the
'chamber. The aperture, of a foot and half,
'made in the paſſage (ſee V), and which was
'two feet before the ſpace the great ſtone occu-
'pied, had been left for the workmen to retire,
'after the deſcent of this enormous ſtone.
'This aperture was afterward cloſed by a ſtone
'of the exact ſize, and only two feet thick,
'which was brought under that aperture, and
'to which they had fixed two rings, toward its
'upper end, to which two rings two chains
'were faſtened, which correſponded, above,
'with another heavier ſtone, hanging over the
'aperture Z, which the great ſtone had occu-
'pied, and which had been left void, when it
'was ſuffered to fall, over the paſſage. The
'ropes that ſuſtained this enormous ſtone were

'ſup-

'ſupported by the poſt (or pillar) Y. There
'was a counterpoiſing weight, however, on the
'lower ſtone, till the workmen ſhould retire,
'through the cavity of a foot and a half, I have
'mentioned, and which was between this ſtone
'and the upper aperture. Having got out,
'through this cavity, the counterpoiſe was re-
'moved, and the ſtone fell into its place, in
'which it was held by another ſtone, that had
'been toothed, three fingers wide; which
'toothing was purpoſely done, and was three
'fingers thick, and ſix or ſeven wide; as may
'be ſeen, at preſent, about a man's height,
'when, entering the pyramid, and leaving the
'three feet three inch paſſage, one riſes up-
'right, in the ſpace V. The toothing (ſee let-
'ter X) of theſe ſtones was the laſt ſecret em-
'ployed to preſerve the chamber from violation,
'and merits attention. Along the ſide-walls of
'the ſpace where the large ſtone, ſix feet long
'and four wide, was incloſed, round flutings
'may be ſeen, three fingers deep, and deſcribed
'by ſhort parallel lines in the plate (fig. 2.)
'which had been cut, that the ſtone might more
'eaſily, and more exactly, fall into its proper
'place. They were alſo meant to render it
'ſtronger, and more ſolid, in caſe of being at-

'tacked. Theſe precautions will prove the ex-
'treme care employed to preſerve the corpſe of
'the king from violation; ſuppoſing men
'ſhould be found impious and daring enough
'for ſuch an enterpriſe. If, after the ſtone, a
'foot and a half wide, and three feet ſix inches
'long, which was the meaſurement of the aper-
'ture V cut in the paſſage, was put in its
'place, and adjuſted, the leaſt opening remain-
'ed, this was filled up with cement. We may
'alſo ſuppoſe the ſtone, itſelf, had a coating of
'cement, before it was raiſed into the ſpace it
'was to fill, which would render its aſcent
'ſlower by counter-action; the handle of the
'mallet would eaſily clear away the ſuperfluous
'cement, and let it into its place. This ſtone
'no longer ſubſiſts, nor yet the great one,
'which was obliged to be broken, to remove it
'out of its place. No one, however, who,
'with the ſmalleſt attention, examines the man-
'ner in which the deſcribed ſpaces are diſpoſed,
'and which are only ſix feet before the entrance
'of the chamber, where the corpſe of the
'king was placed, but will reſt perſuaded theſe
'things have been thus managed; or who will
'not admire the art and ability of the archi-
'tect, who had but the ſmall ſpace of nine feet

'to

'to perform all this in. To make the under-
'ſtanding of this eaſier, the figures of theſe (2
'and 3) have been given on a larger ſcale; the
'eye, in ſuch caſes, being a better interpreter
'than the pen.

'Having cut away, bit by bit, the great
'ſtone, from the grooved ſpace, where it had
'deſcended, they came to the laſt, which ended
'at the chamber, and filled up the ſpace B B.
'This was not difficult to remove; it gave very
'little trouble. They then might freely enter
'the myſterious chamber, ſo well defended,
'D D. The roof of this is flat, and compoſ-
'ed of nine ſtones; the ſeven middle ones are
'four feet wide, and above ſixteen long; ſince
'they reſt, on each ſide, on the two walls, to
'the eaſt and weſt, and which are ſixteen feet
'from each other. The two remaining ſtones
'ſeem only to be two feet wide, each, for what
'there is more of them is concealed, by the two
'other walls over which they are laid. What
'was found in this chamber I leave to the ima-
'gination; hiſtory only undertakes to record
'actions either laudable or ſuch as ought to be
'avoided, and not to perpetuate the memory of
'outrages which attack nature, becauſe they are
'in themſelves ſufficiently deteſtable. Thus,

'burying in oblivion the name of the ſacrilegi-
'ous invader of this mauſoleum, it means to
'leave us ignorant of the ſecrets it incloſed.
'All we know is that this chamber, now,
'whatever it might have done, contains nothing
'but a caſe (or tomb) of granite, ſeven or eight
'feet long, four wide, and as many high (*k*).
'It was here fixed when the place was cloſed at
'the top; and the reaſon it ſtill ſubſiſts, is, it
'could not be taken away without breaking,
'and when broken would have been of no ſer-
'vice. It had a lid, as may be ſeen by the man-
'ner of its rims; but it was broken when taken
'off, and no remains of it are to be found.
'Here, no doubt, the body of the king was
'depoſited, incloſed in two or three caſes (or
'coffins) of precious wood, according to the
'cuſtom of the great. Moſt probably, alſo, this
'chamber contained many other coffins, beſide
'that of the monarch: thoſe, eſpecially, who
'were here entombed with him, as it were, to
'keep him company. In fact, when the body

(*k*) It ſeems to me this ſarcophagus was of yellow marble, like that of the firſt ſtone, found at the entrance of the firſt paſſage. A naturaliſt who ſhould examine theſe different marbles, and thoſe got from mount Colzoum, ſome leagues from where the monaſtery of St Anthony is built, would give to truth the moſt poſitive of proofs.

'of

'of the king, by whom this pyramid was built, 'was laid in this ſuperb mauſoleum, living 'people were here introduced, at the ſame time, 'never to come out, but to be buried alive with 'the prince: which thing I cannot doubt, after 'the conviction I have had of its truth: my 'opinion is founded on what follows. Exactly 'in the middle of the chamber, which is thir-'ty-two feet in length, nineteen high, and ſix-'teen wide, are two holes, oppoſite each other, 'three feet and a half above the floor. The 'one, turned toward the north, is a foot wide, 'eight inches high, and runs, in a right line, to 'the outſide of the pyramid: this hole is now 'ſtopped up by ſtones, five or ſix feet from its 'mouth. The other, cut toward the eaſt, the 'ſame diſtance from the floor, is perfectly 'round, and wide enough to put in the two 'fiſts; it enlarges, at firſt, to a foot diameter, 'and loſes itſelf, deſcending toward the bottom 'of the pyramid. Theſe two holes are at C C; 'and I think, and hope, that ſenſible people 'will ſuppoſe with me, theſe holes were both 'made for the uſe of the perſons who were here 'ſhut up with the body of the king. Through 'the firſt, they were to receive air, food, and 'other neceſſaries; and they had, no doubt, 'provided a long caſe, for this purpoſe, pro-

'portioned to the ſize of the hole; with a cord, 'by which the perſons in the pyramid might 'draw it to them, and another without, by 'which it might be again drawn back. Theſe, 'apparently, were the means which ſupplied 'the neceſſities of thoſe who were within the 'pyramid, ſo long as any one remained living. 'I ſuppoſe each of theſe perſons to be provided 'with a coffin, to contain his corpſe, and that 'they ſucceſſively rendered this laſt pious duty 'to each other, till only one remained, who 'could not have this aſſiſtance, granted to the 'reſt of his companions. The other hole ſerved 'for the voidance of excrements, which fell 'into a deep place, made for that purpoſe. I 'meant to have ſearched the outſide of the py-'ramid for the place that ſhould correſpond 'with the oblong hole, and toward which two 'punctuated lines are drawn, on the plate which 'repreſents the inſide of the building*. Here it 'is poſſible I might have found new proofs of 'what I have advanced: this ſearch, however, 'might not only have given umbrage to the 'powers of government, who would not have

* There are no ſuch lines on the plate: they have been omitted, through ſome miſtake, and we have not thought ourſelves authoriſed in ſupplying what can only be accurately imagined by having been ſeen. T.

failed

'failed to have ſuppoſed ſome treaſure was at-
'tempted to be diſcovered, but I thought the
'hole might terminate in ſome hollow of the
'outſide, and apprehended I might find it total-
'ly ſtopped up, either by the body of the py-
'ramid, or by the coating ſtone. Others, from
'what I have related, may ſearch the part to
'which this aperture ſhould correſpond, and
'thus gain complete proof of its deſtined uſe;
'though, to me, this is not doubtful, nor does
'it ſeem poſſible to imagine any other.

'Having explained, as clearly as the ſubject
'would permit me, by what means, and efforts,
'the pyramid was forced, and opened, I have
'now to remove a doubt, which the reading of
'what I have ſaid may have raiſed. It may be
'aſked, Where were all the ſtones, neceſſarily
'employed in cloſing the paſſages I have de-
'ſcribed, ſtored up? And in what manner were
'theſe paſſages cloſed, by workmen who were
'to get from within? This explanation will not
'be leſs curious, or merit leſs admiration, than
'the former.

'I have already obſerved that, along the bench-
'es of the paſſage P, which was at the bottom of
'the gallery, niches, or mortiſes, had been per-
'pendicularly cut, a foot long, ſix inches wide,
'and eight deep: ſee Q Q. Theſe mortiſes,

'perfectly correſponding with each other, through 'the whole length of the benches, were each 'two feet and a half diſtant, and had been made, 'when building the gallery, that each might 'contain a piece of wood, a foot ſquare, and 'three or four feet long, from which ſix inches 'had been cut at the bottom, for the ſpace of 'eight fingers, agreeing with the mortiſes, into 'which they were to fit. They were to raiſe a 'ſcaffold on, deſtined to ſuſtain the ſtones, want-'ed to fill all the paſſages, which were to be 'cloſed, within the pyramid, as well as the paſ-'ſage P at the bottom of the gallery *. Theſe 'poſts were cut in like manner at their upper 'end, and long pieces of wood, with mortiſes, 'ſimilar to thoſe of the benches, reſted on theſe 'uprights, and formed, from one ſide of the 'gallery to the other, a ſafe ſtay, from bottom 'to top, on which to nail boards, ſix feet and

* The letter of indication, in the French, is F, but the letter F, in the plate, is at the mouth of the ſecond paſſage, very diſtant from the gallery: this muſt, therefore, have been a miſtake. It may not be improper to add, here, that the text in this paſſage indicates, by *fingers* M. Maillet meant *inches*; and that, with a few exceptions, a more literal, conſequently leſs elegant, tranſlation of this than of any other letter in the work was requiſite: not even excepting the meaſurements, and technical phraſes, neceſſary in deſcribing the antiquities of Alexandria and Thebes. T.

'a half

'a half long, ſix inches thick, and well planed, 'whereon a firſt row of ſtones was laid. The 'benches, as I have ſaid, roſe two feet and a 'half above the bottom of the gallery. I ſup- 'poſe the ſcaffold was placed at the height of 'three feet above the benches; therefore, from 'the bottom of the gallery to the ſcaffold was 'an elevation of five feet and a half, which was 'ſufficient for the workmen to ſtand upright. I 'likewiſe obſerved that from the bottom of the 'paſſage to the ceiling of the gallery was twen- 'ty-ſeven feet and a half, and from the bottom 'of the paſſage to the ſcaffold we may allow ſix, 'the remainder from the ſcaffold will then be 'twenty-one and a half, in which ſpace four 'rows of ſtones might be laid, of three feet and 'a half high, the ſize neceſſary to fill the paſ- 'ſages, and there would ſtill remain a ſpace of 'ſeven feet and a half above the ſtones; but I 'will ſuppoſe that, between each row of ſtones, 'boards, three inches thick, were placed, in or- 'der that they might be more eaſily removed, 'by ſliding them along theſe boards. Three 'rows of ſtones were ſufficient to fill all the a- 'pertures which are, at preſent, emptied. It 'may be that there are other paſſages, not o- 'pened, in the body of the pyramid, ſince the 'gallery would eaſily contain four rows of theſe

'ſtones,

'ſtones, and even five, if needful. This may 'be proved by the calculation I have given, 'and it is not probable they would raiſe the gal- 'lery, more than was neceſſary, to the weak- 'ening the whole body of the building.

'But let us content ourſelves with diſcovered 'paſſages which have been forced and opened. 'Let us conſider the quantity of ſtones with 'which they certainly were filled, and which 'have been broken, except three feet and a half, 'or four feet, of theſe ſame ſtones, which re- 'main at F, and which ſtill cloſe the entrance 'of the paſſage H, which communicates with 'the firſt. I call this firſt (ſee B) the exterior 'paſſage, becauſe it was cloſed from without, 'while the others were filled up within the py- 'ramid itſelf, from the ſtones placed along the 'gallery; and I allow three rows of ſtones for 'the filling all theſe paſſages, the juſtneſs of 'which may be found by calculation.

'Thirteen feet and a half of ſtone was neceſ- 'ſary to fill the paſſage which led to the royal 'chamber, and which was on a level with the 'eſplanade, at the upper extremity of the gal- 'lery. A ſtone of ſix feet was let down from 'the ſcaffold at R, and puſhed up the paſſage 'to the entrance of the chamber at B (fig. 2),

'where

'where it was ſtopped by the flooring of the 'chamber, which was two fingers higher than 'that of the paſſage. They afterwards let the 'ſtone of ſix feet fall over this paſſage, which 'I before ſpoke of as ſuſpended in the ſpace 'Z. Then, the workmen having retired through 'the aperture V, and this aperture cloſed, two 'other ſtones, of ſeven feet and a half, were let 'down from the ſcaffold, and perfectly filled up 'the paſſage, which was nineteen feet long.

'We may ſuppoſe that, to facilitate their 'work, they had fixed to the wall at the end of 'the gallery, next the eſplanade, and oppoſite 'to the ſtones ranged on the ſcaffold, a thick 'iron crook, with a ſtrong pulley, by which 'workmen on the platform might raiſe the ſtones 'one after another from the ſcaffold, and let 'them down upon the platform; that afterwards 'the workmen made a ſquare hole on the ſide 'of the ſtone next themſelves, three or four fin-'gers deep, and wider at bottom than at top, 'into which they inſerted two pieces of iron, 'thickeſt at the bottom, with two rings, and 'wedged in with iron. Theſe precautions would 'give them a certain purchaſe to raiſe the ſtones 'over the ſcaffold with the rope that paſſed 'through the rings to ſuſpend them by means of

'the

'the pulley, and afterwards gently let them 'down on the eſplanade or platform, whence 'they might be removed, without much trouble, 'to their place of deſtination.

'Having filled the firſt paſſage, they muſt 'next cloſe up that of letter N, the extent of 'which was a hundred and eighteen feet, lead-'ing, as I have ſaid, into the chamber O, where 'the corpſe of the queen had probably been de-'poſited. This was not a difficult work. They 'next collected as many ſtones as were neceſſa-'ry to cover the entrance of this paſſage to fill 'up the groove L, and the triangular platform 'of ten feet LM, which was before noticed, at 'the entrance of the gallery. A hundred feet 'more of theſe ſtones were wanted to fill up 'the paſſage H, through which the pyramid 'was forced, and which, for the ſpace of eigh-'ty feet in length, is totally diſfigured. A hun-'dred and twenty four feet of ſtone more was 'wanting for the paſſage P beneath the gallery, 'between the banks, and over which the 'ſcaffolding was raiſed. It then was perfectly 'cloſed, except that the laſt ſtone found ſome 'impediment from an elevation of four or five 'fingers, which, as I have already remarked, 'is at the end of this paſſage, and which has 'not been omitted in the plate.

What

'What I have ſaid concerning theſe paſſages, 'their filling up, and the attention of the gal- 'lery, may appear new and bold enough to oc- 'caſion ſome critic to treat it as chimerical, or 'at leaſt conjectural; nor do I require implicit 'faith; but the honour of having imagined a 'very probable ſyſtem cannot be denied me, ca- 'pable of explaining, at a glance, wonders which 'have hitherto been unknown. I will go far- 'ther, and dare affirm, whoever will pay atten- 'tion to my obſervations, their connection and 'conſequences, will find it impoſſible to deny 'that my conjectures, if ſo the critic ſhall pleaſe 'to call them, are ſo well founded that they 'muſt be thought truth. For my own part, af- 'ter all the reſearches, all the reflections I have 'made on the natural ſtructure of the pyramid, 'I boldly declare it is impoſſible theſe things 'could be otherwiſe than as I have deſcribed 'them. I ſee immediately that, the pyramid 'finiſhed, that is to ſay, the grooves made, and 'the gallery roofed, no ſtone could have been 'brought into this gallery large enough to cloſe 'the paſſages from within to without; and that 'the ſole care of the archtiect was to prevent thoſe 'from being extracted which he had brought hither

'hither to ſhut it up in, what he ſuppoſed, an 'inviſible manner. I perceive his deſign in mak-'ing the long groove L at the bottom of the 'gallery, and that it could only have been cut 'for bringing the ſtones which were afterwards 'to fill up the inner paſſage, and by the ſtop-'page I find at the upper end of this groove, 'judge that it muſt itſelf have been alſo filled 'up with ſtones, after the paſſage had been ab-'ſolutely ſtopped. I am confirmed in the dou-'ble uſe of this groove, by its exquiſite poliſh; 'its length, I obſerve, is proportionate to that 'of the inner paſſage; I ſee this paſſage is ſtill 'in part ſtopped, that is to ſay, at its entrance F; 'I alſo ſee they have not penetrated into the py-'ramid through this true paſſage, but, on the 'contrary, have been obliged to make a falſe 'one, through which, again coming to the ſides 'of the paſſage, they have more eaſily attacked 'the ſtones that filled it: I likewiſe find it injur-'ed through its whole extent, which informs 'me recourſe was obliged to be had to violence 'to open it: and further conclude, it is thus in-'jured, as far as where the gallery begins, be-'cauſe the ſtones it contained were broken in 'this paſſage; and that, for the ſpace of a hun-'dred and twenty-four feet, there were, in the

'groove,

'groove, and behind theſe ſtones, four hundred 'and fifteen feet of other ſtones ready continu- 'ally to ſucceed thoſe which ſhould have been 'removed from the paſſage, and to fill the void 'they would have left. I even ſuſpect thoſe 'who forced the pyramid were acquainted with 'this ſucceſſion of ſtones, ſhut in by the groove; 'had they not, they would have been ſatisfied, 'no doubt, with breaking the ſtones which fill- 'ed the paſſage in the opening they had forced. 'This would have been the eaſieſt mode, and, 'if they took another, it was from the know- 'ledge they had of the ſtones which were ready 'to glide through the groove into the paſſage, 'as faſt as it was emptied.

'I have already hinted that there may be 'other paſſages, which ſtill remain cloſed, in 'the pyramid, and it is not, perhaps, without 'reaſon they have been ſearched for; but, un- 'fortunately, their ſearch was miſguided, when 'directed to the bottom of the two chambers. 'If there ſhould be another paſſage beſide thoſe 'already known, they ought, paſt contradiction, 'to ſeek it between the two chambers; nor can 'its entrance be any where but toward the mid- 'dle of the groove; I muſt alſo mention that 'the ſhort projecting lines, at letter M, denote

'certain

'certain holes purpoſely made at the building 'of the pyramid. Theſe holes were to ſerve as 'ſteps to thoſe who, from the paſſage N, lead- 'ing to the firſt chamber, wiſhed to aſcend the 'groove, which, as I have ſaid, is interrupted, 'at this part, or deſcend, the ſame way, into 'this paſſage. I have ſaid that a man might 'paſs from the bottom of the groove, upright, 'on the ſcaffold. No doubt, on both ſides of 'the gallery, and, from the top to the bottom, 'under the ſcaffold, there were ropes, at dif- 'ferent diſtances, fixed to beams, in order that 'thoſe who wiſhed to aſcend or deſcend through 'the groove might without ſlipping. They 'firſt ſerved the workmen in conſtructing the 'gallery, and cloſing the paſſages, and after- 'wards, thoſe who viſited the chambers, thoſe 'who tranſported the corpſes of the king and 'queen, and, finally, the perſons who aſcended 'the royal chamber, with the coffin of the king, 'there to remain and die.

'Thus, there is no doubt but that, by means 'of ſtones placed on the ſcaffold, all theſe paſ- 'ſages, made within the pyramid, were filled.

'Having finiſhed their work, nothing re- 'mained but for the men, who were within, to 'get out, unleſs we ſuppoſe they began by

'break-

'breaking the ſcaffold, and the wood it was 'made of, and that they uſed the ſame means 'to get theſe materials out of the pyramid, as 'they did to get out themſelves. The aperture 'by which they effected this was the well I have 'mentioned, which is on the right hand, at en- 'tering the gallery, and which occupies a part 'of the bottom of the benching, riſing two feet 'in the wall: it is oval, and its ſituation and 'deſcent are indicated at I.

'This well deſcends towards the bottom of 'the pyramid by a line almoſt perpendicular, 'but a little inclining, ſomething in the form 'of the Hebrew letter Lamed, as may be ſeen 'in the plate. About ſixty feet from the mouth, 'is a ſquare window, through which there is an 'entrance to a ſmall grotto, cut in the moun- 'tain, which is not here of ſolid ſtone, but a 'kind of gravel, the particles of which ſtrongly 'adhere. This grotto extends from Eaſt to 'Weſt, and may be above fifteen feet long, af- 'ter which is another groove, dug likewiſe in 'the rock, very ſteep, approaching the perpen- 'dicular. It is two feet four inches wide, two 'feet and a half high, and deſcends through a 'ſpace of a hundred and twenty-three feet, after 'which nothing is found but ſands and ſtones,

'either purpoſely thrown there, or fallen of 'themſelves. I am convinced this paſſage was 'only deſigned as a retreat for the workmen who 'were at the building of the pyramid; its de-'clivity, winding route, ſmallneſs, and depth, 'are certain proofs. The coming from this well, 'which could not have been effected till after 'many turnings, perhaps not till after having 'mounted back towards its mouth, could only, 'I have no doubt, have been through a paſſage, 'over which was a row of ſtones, which they 'had found the art to ſtop, and which fell down 'into this paſſage, by the means of ſome ſpring 'ſet in motion by them, when all the workmen 'had retired, and thus cloſed it up for ever. 'We do not find this aperture has ever been 'attempted; whether it be that they were ig-'norant of it, or that its ſmallneſs impeded the 'workmen. The pyramid has only been at-'tacked by the royal route, through which the 'corpſe of the king muſt have been taken, and 'all the people, living or dead, to be buried 'with him. By the ſame route the attendant 'mourners muſt have entered the pyramid, and 'have come out, after having paid their laſt du-'ties to the monarch, and depoſited his corpſe 'in the ſepulchre himſelf had choſen.

Nor

'Nor muſt it be ſuppoſed that all thoſe who 'worked at this vaſt edifice were acquainted 'with its interior ſtructure, nor even that ſuch 'knowledge was to be obtained by entering the 'pyramid after it was finiſhed. This was a ſe-'cret known only to the architects who had 'planned this proud edifice, or at leaſt to a ſmall 'number of ſelect perſons, who worked under 'their direction, to form the paſſages I have 'juſt mentioned, in this my deſcription of the 'pyramid. It is, moreover, moſt probable, theſe 'workmen were not venal, or capable, from any 'motive whatever, of betraying ſuch a ſecret: 'they were, no doubt, perſons choſen from thoſe 'moſt worthy, and moſt attached to the monarch, 'among the various workmen in his ſervice, 'and on whoſe zeal, probity, gratitude, and re-'ligion, all dependence might be placed. I can 'readily believe, to inſure their faith, the prince 'named them himſelf, before his death, and ap-'pointed a commodious, peaceable, and honour-'able retreat for them, in the temples (*d*), en-'riched by the gifts of theſe ſovereigns, which

(*d*) We ſee the ruins of ancient buildings, before the pyramids, which probably were temples where offerings were made for the kings whoſe bodies repoſed in theſe ſuperb mauſoleums.

'could not fail to accompany theſe kind of 'buildings, and which, as I have before demon-'ſtrated, really did accompany them.

Such is the opinion of Maillet concerning the inſide of the grand pyramid, and, after twice examining it, with his book in my hand, I could not but admire the juſtneſs of his remarks. His means of cloſing the paſſages to me appear probable, and they have certainly been emptied as he has deſcribed.

Some Arabian authors pretend, about the beginning of the eighteenth century, avarice excited the caliph Mahmoud to violate this ancient monument, thinking to find treaſures here, but his hopes were deceived. Some idols of gold, beſide the mummy of the king, were the ſole reward of many years' labour, and exceſſive expenſes. Other oriental writers attribute this enterpriſe to the famous caliph Aaroun el Raſchid, who lived in the time of Charlemagne, to whom he ſent a water-clock, the firſt ſeen in France. This caliph, who cauſed ſcience to flouriſh, and had the beſt Greek and Roman works tranſlated into Arabic, wiſhing to know the interior of this aſtoniſhing edifice, had it opened. Be theſe opinions as they may, we cannot doubt but the opening of the pyramid

was

was effected under the government of the Arabs.

It is alſo an inconteſtable fact, that it was a maufoleum for one of the Egyptian Pharaohs. The tombs ſcattered over the plain, at the end of which it is built, the ſarcophagus of the great chamber, the niche of the chamber beneath, the teſtimony of Herodotus, Strabo, and the Arabian hiſtorians, all prove its truth. I know that M. Paw (*e*), who in his cloſet ſees better than travellers, teaches them this pyramid was the ſepulchre of Oſiris; but he is ſingle in an opinion which contradicts facts and hiſtory. Rendering juſtice to the knowledge of this learned gentleman, I cannot avoid, in continuing theſe letters, to remove ſome errors, eſtabliſhed by him, relative to the diætetic ſyſtem of the Egyptians, and the climate.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(*e*) *Rech. Phil. ſur les Egyptiens et les Chinois*, page 50.

LETTER XIX.

The other pyramids, adjacent places, grotto of the Santon, the grand Sphinx, its ſignification, and the return to Giza.

To M. L. M.

Giza.

I HAVE collected the inquiries of the ancients and moderns concerning the grand pyramid, have added ſuch obſervations as my own viſits have ſupplied, and, hope, Sir, theſe will, together, give you a ſatisfactory idea, and make the trouble of ſearching numerous volumes, which to read and reflect on, would but augment your doubts, ſo long as you ſhall not come and examine them yourſelf with the moſt ſcrupulous attention, unneceſſary. After meditating over the deſcriptions given of theſe ancient monuments, I own, I found it impoſſible to form any fixed judgment, and remained in painful incertitude. The darkneſs of ſo many different opinions concealed the truth, and, the more I read, the leſs I knew; but, guided by reflection, while

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at the foot of the pyramid, and, afterwards, in its deep interior gloom, on its high top, I have believed I diſcovered the truth I ſought. May it have guided my pen, and given conviction to your mind, for even in matters of ſcience doubt is painful.

Herodotus (*f*) informs us, the expenſe of building this pyramid, in vegetables only, to feed the workmen, was written in Egyptian characters, on its marble. The removal of the coating has deſtroyed theſe hieroglyphics, but, did they remain as they do in a hundred other parts of Egypt, they would afford no pictures of thought. They are mute and inſenſible as the ſtone on which they are engraved. And muſt the language which would teach us the hiſtory of ancient Egypt, and caſt a ray of light over the darkneſs that envelops the firſt

(*f*) Egyptian characters are cut on the marble of the pyramid, deſcribing how much it coſt to feed the workmen, only in onions and other vegetables. The prieſt who interpreted theſe hieroglyphics to me ſaid it amounted to 1600 talents. *Herodotus, Euterpe.*

The ſum will appear chimerical to thoſe who ſhall calculate in their cloſets, but he is not aſtoniſhed at it who has ſeen this mountain built of rocks. This paſſage proves, too, that vegetables, in the moſt diſtant ages, were, as at preſent, the chief food of the Egyptians.

ages of the earth, be buried with the prieſts by whom it was invented?

It is time we ſhould continue our voyage, Sir. — Having obſerved all that could intereſt, we proceeded to the ſecond pyramid, which ſeems as high as the firſt. Strabo affirms it is ſo, Diodorus Siculus the ſame; but adds that the baſe of the ſecond is leſs (*g*), and attributes its conſtruction to Cephren, brother and ſucceſſor to Chemmis, who built the one I have already deſcribed. The coating of this pyramid is deſtroyed in many places, but the fractures made by force, prove that men, rather than time, have effected this havock. Sixty feet of the upper part is entire, becauſe, no doubt, it was the moſt difficult to detach. Perhaps thoſe who have attempted to violate this ancient mauſoleum, repelled by the length, difficulty, and expenſe of the work, contented themſelves with carrying off the outſide marble.

Eaſt of theſe two pyramids, is a third, which appears very ſmall, comparatively, yet is about three hundred feet ſquare (*h*), and was built by Micerinus, who, wiſhing to equal the fame of

(*g*) Diodorus Siculus, lib. i. ſect. 2.
(*h*) Strabo, lib. xvii.

his

his father Chemmis, would coat it with marble from the Thebaïs (*i*), which is beautiful, ſpotted with black, of a fine grain, exceedingly hard, and capable of a perfect poliſh. The prince died when the work was only half done. The fineneſs of the marble has led the Arabs to break it off. Some ſtones ſtill remain, and fragments round the baſe. The name of Micerinus was inſcribed on the northern ſide (*k*), but, like the hieroglyphics of the grand pyramid, has been removed with the coating.

Many fables are related by hiſtorians of this pyramid. Some ſay it was built by a famous courteſan, from the gains ſhe made by her lovers. Others that an eagle carrying off the ſmall ſlipper of the beauteous Rhodope come to Naucratis, let it fall at Memphis, and that the king, charmed by its beauteous form, wiſhed to know whom it belonged to, became afterwards in love with Rhodope, married her, and that ſhe built the pyramid.

(*i*) The quarries of this fine marble are at the upper end of Egypt, in the mountain at the foot of which Syene was built. There are three ſorts, the firſt a perfect black, the ſecond only ſpotted, and the third mixed with red. The granite of the two firſt was uſed in the building of tombs, the other for columns and obeliſks.

(*k*) Diodorus Siculus, lib. i. ſect. 2.

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The Arabs, who love the marvellous, have eagerly credited theſe childiſh tales, and called the pyramid Heram-elbent, —the ancient edifice of the maiden. Round here are the ruins of three other pyramids (*l*), built, ſays Diodorus, as mauſoleums for the wives of the kings who built the great ones.

Oppoſite the ſecond, eaſtward, is the enormous ſphinx, the whole body of which, as I have ſaid, is buried in the ſand, the top of the back only to be ſeen, which is above a hundred feet long, and is of a ſingle ſtone, making part of the rock on which the pyramids reſt. Its head riſes about ſeven and twenty feet above the ſand. Mahomet has taught the Arabs to hold all images of men or animals in deteſtation; and they have disfigured the face with their arrows and lances. Pliny pretends (*m*) the body of Amaſis was depoſited within this ſphinx. Many authors believe the well of the grand pyramid ended here, and that the prieſts came here, at cer-

(*l*) Salah Eddin demoliſhed them, and built the walls of Grand Cairo, and the caſtle on mount Mokattam, with the ſtones.

(*m*) Plin. Hiſt. Nat.

tain

tain times, to deliver their oracles; but theſe are mere conjectures (*n*).

M. Paw (*o*) ſays, theſe ſphinxes, the body of which is half a virgin, half a lion, are images of the deity, whom they repreſent as a hermaphrodite; which opinion ſeems not to me more happy than that concerning the ſepulchre of Oſiris. The Nile increaſes, overflows, and inundates Egypt, under the ſigns Leo and Virgo; and the ſphinx was a hieroglyphic which told the people when this moſt important event in the whole year ſhould happen, which is the reaſon this figure is ſo very often repeated: it ſtands before all remarkable buildings, and meant to ſay, "Inhabitants, under ſuch a ſign, "at ſuch a time, the river ſhall overflow your "fields, and make them fertile." While we were admiring the miracles of ancient Egypt, and M. Adanſon, firſt royal interpreter at Alexandria, was employed drawing, we ſaw ten Arabs come galloping, with their lances, and

(*n*) They bring the cavity on the top of the head of the ſphinx, through which the prieſts delivered their oracles, as a proof of this opinion; but this cavity is only five feet deep, and neither communicates with the mouth nor the body of the ſphinx.

(*o*) *Rech. Phil. ſur les Egyptiens et les Chinois.*

approach-

approaching within piſtol ſhot, either to attack or force money from us. We had muſkets and piſtols, and were very able to repel them; but on the firſt fire a whole tribe could have fallen upon us. We therefore bade our cheiks ſpeak to, and tell them we were their gueſts, and they had taken us under their protection. This diſarmed them at once, for they highly reſpect the rights of hoſpitality. Alighting, they offered to accompany us wherever we pleaſed; but as they do not like to be troubled for nothing, they politely aſked ſome gratuity, which we beſtowed. This ſlight preſent having ratified peace, I heard them ſay, in a half whiſper, let us viſit the ſaint. Away they went, and I, following, paſſed the ſecond pyramid, and ſtopped with them at the door of a grotto cut in the rock, into which, pulling off their ſhoes, they went. I was the only European who imitated them. The grotto was ſpacious, clean, handſome, and very cool. At one end was a niche, ſix feet high, before which an old curtain, with many holes, was drawn. The Arabs came near with reverence: each kneeled in turn, and kiſſed a foot which was held out under the curtain. My turn being come, I approached, and ſaid, O holy ſaint, ſhow me thy face. My compliment was taken

taken as an inſult, and, judging by my pronunciation I was not an Arab, he anſwered, ſurlily —*Rouh anni ia kelb*. "Leave me, dog." Hearing this, the Muſſulmen looked furiouſly at me, and I, haſtily, went away; happy that my imprudence had no worſe conſequences, and promiſing never more to hold converſation with an Egyptian Santon.

Theſe men are vagabonds who affect total indifference to the riches of this world, and, living on alms, are guilty of a thouſand extravagancies which make them paſs for inſpired. They go entirely naked through the cities, and, violating decency, bluſh not, publicly, to commit actions which the reſt of mankind conceal in the darkneſs of night, or the veil of myſtery (*p*). I cannot deſcribe the veneration in which the populace hold theſe ſhameleſs cynics; women eſpecially, who, naturally timid and modeſt, forget, in their behalf, that reſerve and pudency ought always to accompany their ſex,

(*p*) A friend from Tunis has written to me concerning a ſcene of this nature, which paſſed in the open city, between a Santon and a woman. The people reſpectfully ſurrounded the momentary man and wife, and any European, who ſhould have ventured to joke at the ſight, would have riſqued being ſtoned.

and

and that men who with effrontery gratify every appetite, do not merit ſo much reſpect.

Satisfied with ſeeing and wondering, we returned to Giza; where we remained ſome days examining the environs. We met, on our route, ſeveral chacals (or jackalls), which ran, with great ſpeed, towards the mountains. Theſe fawn-coloured animals, the ſize of a dog, have a dragging tail, and a pointed muzzle. They live on hunting, and the fiſh of the lakes. The Arabs call them *dib*, and they are the wolves of Africa.

I have the honour to be, &c.

LETTER XX.

Giza, an ancient ſuburb of Foſtat; miſtake of modern travellers. The charming view of the Nile. The iſle of Raouda, Old Cairo, and the boats which inceſſantly paſs up and down the river; with particulars concerning the manufactory and making of ſal-ammoniac.

To M. L. M.

Giza.

GIZA, as you have ſeen, Sir, is a ſmall place, governed by a kiachef, and owes its origin to the governors of the Caliphs, who choſe Foſtat for their place of reſidence. The ancients, who have exactly deſcribed the environs of the pyramids, do not mention Giza, which was founded by the Arabs, as its name ſhows (*q*). Shaw was deceived in placing it on the ancient ſite of Mem-

(*q*) Giza, in Arabic, ſignifies angle or end; and this name was given it becauſe, when Maſr Foſtat flouriſhed, Giza, one of its ſuburbs, was ſeparated from it only by the Nile. Macrizi, ſpeaking of the deſcent of Louis IX. and mentioning one end of Damietta, ſays, The Giza of Damietta.

phis;

phis; for, beſide that there are neither ruins nor antiquities here, the Greeks, Romans, and eſpecially the Arabs, have ſo poſitively marked the ſituation of the ancient metropolis of Egypt, that, reading them attentively, it is impoſſible to be miſtaken, as I think I ſhall prove in my next letter.

Giza is ſurrounded by immenſe plains, profuſely covered with vegetables, flax, and corn. Here they grow the carthamus, improperly, by the people of Provence, called ſafranon, the flower of which they buy and ſend to Marſeilles, to uſe in dying the cloths of Languedoc. The Egyptians, wanting wood, make fuel of the ſtalk: the pod includes a grain, from which they extract *zeit-helou*, ſoft oil, of an inſipid taſte, but eaten by the common people, though ſeldom uſed by the rich, but in the illuminations ſo frequent in Egypt.

This ſmall town has a manufactory of ſal-ammoniac, into the laboratory of which I ſeveral times went, and, notwithſtanding the horribly infectious ſmoke, obſerved the procedure. Imagine arches with parallel apertures or ſlits, through which the necks, two inches long, and equal in diameter, of round glaſs-bottles, are put, which, before they are thus ranged, are coated

coated with clay. The interſtices between each bottle are alſo ſtopped with clay; the bottles are contained within the arch, and the necks are ſupported by walls, the neck only being expoſed to the action of the open air; theſe bottles are full of ſoot, ſwept from the chimneys of the common people, whoſe conſtant fuel is dung of animals, dried in the ſun, and mixed with chopped ſtraw. A fire is lighted underneath the mouths of the bottles, of the ſame ſubſtances, and is kept burning three days and nights. The bottles are unſtopped, and the exhaling vapour of the heated ſoot inſenſibly attaches itſelf to the necks, where it condenſes, cryſtalliſes, and forms a bright and ſolid body, about two inches thick. The proceſs over, the bottle is broken, the aſhes cleared, and the cake of ſal-ammoniac, ſuch as ſent to Europe, obtained, firſt taking from its underſide a black cruſt, which has not acquired the degree of perfection neceſſary; but this cruſt, being put into other bottles, yields, on a ſecond proceſs, the moſt eſteemed and moſt perfect ſal-ammoniac. About two thouſand quintals are annually fabricated in the different manufactories of the country: it is an article of commerce between the Egyptians and Europeans, being

uſed by pewterers, goldſmiths, founders, and chymiſts.

The French merchants of Grand Cairo have a country-houſe at Giza, and a ſmall garden, with orange, lemon, and date-trees, ſituated on the bank of the Nile. The beautiful iſland of Raouda, and its odoriferous bowers, the mekias, againſt which the waves beat with violence, Old Cairo, and its ſurrounding gardens, with a multitude of boats which inceſſantly croſs the river, are ſeen from its windows; extenſive and verdant proſpects, variegated with houſes, moſques, or more diſtant minarets, charm the eye, inducing the ſpectator to ſit hours comtemplating theſe ſmiling objects, while the freſh air, which follows the courſe of the Nile in currents, comes, re-animates the ſenſes, and gives the ſoul that energy which is neceſſary to taſte the beautiful and the ſublime. To Giza therefore, fatigued by buſineſs, or ſuffocated by the heats of Grand Cairo, reverberated from the burning ſands of Mokattam, the French come to repoſe: at Giza they recover their health, and, in pure and cooling airs, breathe life in the aromatic exhalations of plants and flowers.

I have the honour to be, &c.

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LETTER XXI.

On the true ſituation of Memphis, confirmed by Herodotus, Strabo, Pliny, and the Arabian authors; modern travellers refuted. The city, as it was in the time of Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus; its temples, palaces, and lakes deſcribed. Quotation from Abulfeda, proving its total deſtruction by Amrou; ruins ſtill ſeen near the village Menf, the poor remains of the ancient Memphis.

To M. L. M.

Grand Cairo.

IT is time, Sir, to ſpeak of Memphis, and examine the opinions of writers concerning this celebrated city, which are very oppoſite; ſome pretending it ſtood where Giza now ſtands, and others placing it five leagues farther ſouth. Is it not aſtoniſhing that the ſite of the ancient metropolis of Egypt, a city near ſeven leagues in circumference (*r*), containing magnificent

(*r*) A hundred and fifty ſtadia. Diodorus Siculus, lib. 1. ſect. 2.

temples and palaces which art laboured to render eternal, ſhould at preſent be a ſubject of diſpute among the learned? Thus, in their turn, are all the proud monuments of man buried in the duſt. Hiſtory, I hope, will teach us to find the remaining veſtiges of Memphis, and diſſipate that darkneſs in which erudition has itſelf endeavoured to hide them.

"Queen Semiramis built the caſtle of Grand "Cairo (*s*), into which ſhe put a numerous "garriſon of Babylonians to be a check upon "Memphis, which ſtood facing it, weſt of the "Nile, and prevent rebellion in the capi-"tal (*t*)."

Shaw is of the ſame opinion, and ſays, the ancient Memphis, the remains of which are now buried and covered over, ſtood oppoſite Cairo, on the bank of the Nile next Libya, at the village of Giza (*u*).

Pococke, an exact obſerver, comes afterward, and, inſpecting the place, and reading the ancients, is of a contrary opinion (*x*). War is

(*s*) I think I have removed this firſt error in Letter VII. and proved it was built by Salah Eddin.

(*t*) Father Sicard, Lettres Edifiantes, p. 471.

(*u*) Shaw's Travels, vol. ii. chap. 4.

(*x*) Pococke's Travels, book i. chap. 5.

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declared among the learned of England, and the authors of the Modern Univerſal Hiſtory have pronounced the following ſentence.

" The city of Meſr (the Memphis of the old " geographers) was ſituated on the weſtern, or " Libyan, bank of the Nile, and occupied the " ſpot on which the village of Geeza at preſent " ſtands. This we learn from Dr. Shaw, " whoſe geographical obſervations relating to " Egypt and Arabia Petræa are more curious, " and ſuperior in point of truth, at leaſt proba- " bility, learning, accuracy, and judgment, to " thoſe of any other modern traveller ..... " In fine, his book will ſtand its ground when " all the efforts of envy and malice have been " ſpent; when ſome of thoſe others, written " in imitation of it, or with a deſign to depre- " ciate it, will be buried in oblivion, or, at " leaſt, meet with that contempt which they ſo " juſtly deſerve (*y*)."

Here, Sir, is a very dogmatic deciſion againſt all travellers who ſhall dare to contradict Dr. Shaw. If the authors of the Univerſal Hiſtory thought they had no occaſion to read the ancients, they ought, at leaſt, to have looked

(*y*) Mod. Univ. Hiſt. vol. i. page 438, edit. 1759.

over the Arabian geographers; they would not then ſo emphatically have ſupported an evident error. Permit me to cite my authorities.

" Memphis is ſituated in the narroweſt part " of Egypt, on the weſtern border of the Nile, " the waters of which form a lake on the north " and weſt of the city (*z*)."

This is a vague deſcription; for, to determine the ſituation of Memphis, it is neceſſary the lake ſtill ſhould ſubſiſt, and that the valley of Egypt ſhould be meaſured to find its narroweſt part. Strabo (*a*) has been more circumſtantial. " From the caſtle of Babylon (*b*) the " pyramids near Memphis are ſeen, on the " other ſide of the Nile.—Lakes, in part, ſur- " round the city; the buildings which were the " palaces of the kings are in ruins, and extend " from the mountain to the plain where the " city is built, as far as the borders of the lake, " ſhaded by a ſacred grove. Forty ſtadia from " Memphis is a rocky hill, where a great num- " ber of pyramids are built."

That Strabo ſaw the pyramids from the caſtle of Babylon is not wonderful, ſince they are ſeen

(*z*) Herodotus, Euterpe. (*a*) Strabo, lib. xvii.
(*b*) I marked its ſite in Letter VIII.

from

from the fortreſs which overlooks Grand Cairo, and much farther. He adds, they were near Memphis, on a hill, diſtant only forty ſtadia, that is to ſay five miles; which will not agree with Giza, that being three leagues from the neareſt pyramids, and ſix from thoſe of Saccara. But I will not dwell on this, becauſe Pliny removes the difficulty paſt doubt (c).

"The three grand pyramids, ſeen by the "watermen from all parts, ſtand on a barren "and rocky hill, between Memphis and the "Delta, one league from the Nile, two from "Memphis, and near the village of Buſiris."

This paſſage irrevocably fixes the conteſted ſpot, and fully diſplays truth: for he ſays the pyramids ſtood between Memphis and the Delta; and Giza, certainly, ſtands between the pyramids and the Delta; it, therefore, is impoſſible Memphis could be ſituated at Giza. Or, which is the ſame thing, Memphis, according to Pliny, was two leagues ſouth of the pyramids, and Giza is three leagues north; wherefore, it cannot have been built where Memphis ſtood; nor can Pliny be ſaid to be miſtaken, for his deſcription is preciſe. Buſiris ſtill ſubſiſts, now Bou-

(c) Plin. Hiſt. Nat. lib. xxxvi. cap. 12.

ſir, not far from the pyramids, which are a league from the river. The ſmall town Menf, the ancient Memphis, is about two leagues ſouth of theſe monuments. The authors of the Univerſal Hiſtory would have been cautious of implicitly believing, and blindly adopting, an erroneous opinion, had they read this paſſage; eſpecially as it had been oppoſed by one of their own countrymen (*d*), who was judicious, and well-informed; they would not have fulminated an anathema againſt all who doubted in Dr. Shaw. I, like them, render all homage to his merits, his book abounds in valuable knowledge; but, as errors and truths are blended, I cannot avoid removing the firſt, whenever opportunity offers.

A king of Egypt, having turned the courſe of the Nile (*e*), which diffuſed itſelf over the ſands of Libya, and the Delta being formed from the mud (*f*) of its waters, canals were cut

(*d*) Pococke's Travels. (*e*) See Letter I.

(*f*) Though hiſtory, which proves the Delta formed from the ſands and mire of the Nile, no longer ſubſiſted, and though we ſhould reject the opinions of Herodotus, Strabo, Diodorus, Pliny, &c. who affirm the fact, we could not but admit it; having conſidered this fine part of Egypt. Throughout the Delta, no other ſtones are found than thoſe brought

cut to drain lower Egypt. The monarchs who, till then, had reſided at Thebes, removed nearer the mouth of the river, to enjoy an air more temperate, and be more ready to defend the entrance of their empire. They founded the city of Memphis, and endeavoured to render it equal to the ancient capital, decorating it with many temples (*g*), among which that of Vulcan drew the attention of travellers: its grandeur, ſumptuouſneſs, and rich ornaments, each excited admiration. Another temple, beſide the barren plain, was dedicated to Serapis, the principal entrance to which was a vaſt ſphinx avenue. Egypt has always been oppreſſed with ſands, which, accumulating here, had half buried ſome of the ſphinx, and others up to the neck, in the time of Strabo; at preſent they have diſappeared. To prevent this diſaſter, they built a long mound (*h*), on the ſouth ſide, which alſo ſerved as a barrier againſt the inundations of the river, and the attacks of enemies. The palace of the kings, and a fortreſs built on

brought for the building of temples, and grand edifices; nor is any thing to be obtained but the black mud of the Nile, mixed with ſand, by digging in any part whatever twenty feet deep.

(*g*) Strabo, lib. xvii. (*h*) Diodorus Siculus, lib. i.

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the mountain, defended it on the weſt, the Nile on the eaſt, and to the north were lakes, beyond which was the plain of mummies, and the cauſeway which led from Buſiris to the great pyramids. Thus ſituated, Memphis commanded the valley of Egypt, and communicated by canals with the lakes Mœris and Mareotis. Its citizens might traverſe the kingdom in boats, and it, therefore, became the centre of wealth, commerce, and arts, where aſtronomy and geometry, invented by the Egyptians, flouriſhed (*i*). Hither the Greeks came to obtain knowledge, which, carrying into their own country, they brought to perfection. Thebes and her hundred gates lay forgotten, and on the hill near Memphis roſe thoſe proud monuments, thoſe ſuperb mauſoleums, which, alone, of the wonders of the world, have braved deſtructive time, and men ſtill more deſtructive. The glory of Memphis endured for ages, till Cambyſes came, at the head of a formidable army, and laid Egypt deſolate; by this ferocious conqueror were her temples and famous edifices deſtroyed. This was his endeavour, as it was to extinguiſh the ſciences, which a people, ſur-

(*i*) Strabo, lib. xvii.

rounded

rounded by waters and deſerts, had, in their fertile valley, firſt invented. With their privileges the prieſts loſt a part of the knowledge that was attached to them. Memphis, however, diſfigured as it was, preſerved ſuch remains of magnificence, that it ſtill was the firſt city of the world, and ſtruggled, for more than two centuries, to ſhake off the odious yoke of the Perſians. Alexander, to whom ſhe yielded, revenged her wrongs, and, abandoning himſelf to guilty phrenſy, renewed the horrors Cambyſes had committed at Thebes and Memphis, on Perſepolis (*k*). Is there not juſtice for empires as for individuals? Charmed with the beauties of Egypt, the antiquities of which he viſited, he founded a city there in his own name, ſeveral ages before the Chriſtian æra, which the Ptolemies, his ſucceſſors, embelliſhed, endeavouring to join the majeſtic architecture of Egypt to the elegance of Greece. The Pharos roſe the admiration of the world; Alexandria became another Rome, and arts and ſciences, beneath the eye of the ſovereign, ſpread their brilliancy afar. Commerce attracted wealth and abundance hither, and to the new capital

(*k*) Quintus Curtius.

Memphis

Memphis daily ſaw its inhabitants remove (*l*). Under Auguſtus the latter was ſtill a great city, populous, and full of foreigners, yet was but then the ſecond in Egypt. Six hundred years after, it was conquered by the Arabs, after a long and bloody ſiege, who took it by aſſault, and, according to Abulfeda, effected its deſtruction. I will cite the paſſage from this learned hiſtorian, becauſe it proves the ſite Pliny gave Memphis, and deſtroys the error of various writers (*m*), who pretend that the governors, under the emperors of Conſtantinople, reſided at Grand Cairo, when Amrou conquered Egypt. In my eighth letter I thought I had demonſtrated this city did not then exiſt; what follows is an additional proof: "Menf (*n*), "(that is to ſay Memphis) is the ancient

(*l*) Strabo, lib. xvii. (*m*) Maillet—Father Sicard.

(*n*) "Menf hia maſr elcadima oua hia an garbi el Nil. "Oua lemma fatahha Amrou ebn el Aas kharabha oua bena "el Foſtat men elbar elakhar el ſharki be amr Omar ebn el "Khattab. Oua be menf atar cadimo azima madfalo men "elſakhour oua el menhouta el maſoura. Oua alaiha de-"han akhdar, oua khairo baki ila zamanna, hada lam iet-"khaier men el ſhams oua khairha ala toul hada elſlemma. "Oua menf men maſr ala marhela cariba."

Abulfeda, Deſcription of Egypt.

Maſr

" Maſr (*o*) of Egypt, ſtanding on the weſtern " ſhore of the Nile. Amrou, ſon of El Aas, " took it by aſſault, totally deſtroyed it, and, " by order of Omar, ſon of Kettab, built the " city of Foſtat, on the oppoſite ſhore. There " are remarkable ruins at Menf—the remains " of its ancient ſplendour, which are ſuffered to " decay; ſtones, the ſculpture and painting of " which excite wonder, and whoſe colours nei- " ther ſun nor air have yet effaced. Menf is " a ſmall day's journey from Grand Cairo."

This agrees with Pliny's deſcription, and with what yet remains. The village of Menf, a feeble reſidue of an immenſe city, is ſix leagues from Grand Cairo, on the weſtern ſide of the Nile, preciſely where the learned naturaliſt marks its ſite; it being four leagues from Grand Cairo to the pyramids, and two from thence to Menf. The ruins round it confirm the teſtimony of A-

(*o*) I obſerved, in my letter on old Cairo, that the Arabs always beſtow the name of Maſr on the capital of Egypt. Memphis bore it till ruined by Amrou; Foſtat next, and preſerved it, till Schaouar ſet fire to the city to prevent its being taken by the French; ſince when Grand Cairo is called Maſr; and Foſtat, Maſr elatic, the ancient Maſr, or the ancient capital.

bulfeda,

bulfeda, and the lakes (*p*) mentioned by Herodotus and Strabo have not entirely diſappeared, one being near Saccara, with a grove of acacia on the weſt of Menf, the other preciſely north, which, during the inundation, extends to the cauſe-way thrown up in the marſh which ſeparates the Nile from the grand pyramids, and was made to facilitate the conveyance of the marble for the paſſages and coating of theſe edifices (*q*). The mound ſubſiſts, with bridges built to leave the free circulation to the waters, and, during the time of inundation, thoſe who come to ſee the pyramids coaſt it in boats.

Theſe, Sir, were the lakes which the Memphians were obliged to croſs when they conveyed their dead to the plains where the kings had raiſed their mauſoleums. As there were temples here (*r*) where expiatory ſacrifices were offered for the deceaſed, as theſe ſilent abodes

(*p*) Theſe lakes, which all antiquity deſcribes near Memphis, are proof demonſtrative it was ſituated at Menf, and not at Giza, for there is no trace of any lake within three leagues of the latter.

(*q*) Herodotus, Euterpe.

(*r*) Each great pyramid had its temple, and prieſts, whoſe office was to immolate expiatory victims, and pray for the dead.

were

were inviolable, and the impious man who ſhould have dared profane and trouble their profound peace would have been puniſhed with death, all the Egyptians wiſhed here to be entombed. Each family ſunk, in the rock covered with ſands, a gloomy habitation, where, in their turn, father and ſon were depoſited with religious piety, little ſuppoſing that a time ſhould come when the enlightened people of Europe would have them torn from their ſepulchres; or that their bodies, buried and preſerved with ſo much care, would become an object of vile traffic. The Greeks, who have been preſent (*s*) at the judgments the Egyptians, alone, of all the earth's inhabitants, pronounced upon the dead, and who had ſeen the places where their bodies were brought in boats, on paying a ſmall fee, have invented the fable of Charon and Hell. The beauty of the plains beyond that vaſt ſolitude, the ſands, the canals, by which they were watered, preſerving their eternally verdant banks, gave them the idea of the Styx, the Lethe, and the Elyſian fields, which their fruitful and fine imaginations embelliſhed with all the beauties

(*s*) Ορφεα γαρ (φασι) εις Αιγυπτον παραβαλοντα και μετασχοντα της τελετης και των Διονυσιακων μυστηριων μεταλαβειν.

Diod. Sic. p. 1[illegible]. Ed. Hen. Steph. 1559.

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of poetry. The fable gained credit among the populace, and became an article of pagan religion.

Such, Sir, are the reflections which attentively reading the ancients, and seeing the environs of the pyramids, have produced: may they be thought worthy your attention, and possess the merit of truth.

I have the honour to be, &c.

LET-

LETTER XXII.

From Boulac to Damietta: that branch of the Nile, its canals, the villages, towns, and antiquities, on the banks, deſcribed. Of the fair of Tanta; the manners of the inhabitants of that part of Egypt; the groves near Semennoud; the chicken ovens at Manſoura, where the French army was defeated; and the navigation of the river.

To M. L. M.

Grand Cairo, 1779.

IT is ſixteen months ſince you received my laſt letter; during this long interval anxious friendſhip has often painted the misfortunes to which a traveller is expoſed, in a barbarous country, and has more than once made you fear for my life. Honoured be the feelings which to me are ſo precious, and which my ſympathetic heart repays. But calm your apprehenſions; travellers have a deity who exacts prudence and fortitude, and, when religiouſly obeyed, ſhelters them from danger. Ceaſe then your alarms,

and attribute my ſilence to my continued journeys and labours. Yet, Sir, forget not to write to me. The worth of a letter is here fully known; it is opened with tranſport, read with avidity, and the day of its reception is a day of feſtivity. Beneath this burning ſun, amid theſe deſerts, the want of a friend is powerfully felt; and whatever brings him to memory, is moſt precious. Seldom does a Frenchman find, among Turks and Arabs, a heart that vibrates with his own, and crowding ſenſations are born and die unparticipated. Pity me, therefore, and ſend me what conſolation abſence can receive; that, while I read characters your hand has traced, I may ſee, may hear, you; while fancy, ſweet enchantreſs, but illuſive, gives me momentary happineſs, and ſtrews the thorny road of life with flowers.—Let us continue our correſpondence.

During the long ſilence of which you complain, my time has been employed, Sir, in making two journeys into Lower Egypt, viſiting the towns and canals of the eaſtern branch of the Nile, and living a year at Damietta, to acquire more perfectly the Arabic dialect ſpoken in Syria. A thouſand times have I wandered over the delicious environs of this city, not yet

ſatisfied

ſatisfied with contemplating the beauties of nature, with beholding the happy picture of plenty. I have traced the army of Louis IX. from its landing to Manſoura. Honeſt Joinville has written the hiſtory of that expedition, the beginning of which was ſo proſperous, and the end ſo unhappy; but his narration is obſcure, and leaves much to wiſh. The curious accounts of the Arabic authors, and an inſpection of the places, have given me the means of elucidating and ſupplying information which he could not acquire. When I have deſcribed my journey, I will endeavour to retrace this ſhort, but intereſting, part of our hiſtory.

The fifteenth of February I went for Damietta, in a *canjai*, that is to ſay, a leſs boat than a *mach*, and built for pleaſure. It contained a ſmall, and a larger cabin, which we carpetted; a mat in the form of a canopy, raiſed on the deck, ſheltered us from the ſun, while we beheld the country we paſſed. A faithful janiſſary, who had been in the army of the famous Ali Bey, and an Arabian ſervant, accompanied me, all well armed, a very neceſſary precaution on the branch of Damietta, where attacks are continual. The *Fellah* (*r*) who inhabit the

(*r*) Egyptian huſbandmen.

ſhores, come, under the favour of darkneſs, aſſail the boats, and, if not reſiſted, murder the paſſengers, and ſeize their effects. A foreigner ought to be well aſſured of his ſervants, and the fidelity of the patron or captain, who, often in colluſion with the thieves, ſhare the ſpoil. Taught by experience, I give this advice to future travellers, having nearly loſt my life for not having followed it at firſt.

The moſt eſſential ſtores are rice and coffee, which we took care to provide. The villages will ſupply milk, eggs, and poultry; we added ſome bottles of old wine of Cyprus, which Mahamet Aſſalama (*s*), though a good muſſulman, was very happy to partake of occaſionally, though always in a corner, and taking care not to be ſeen even by the boatmen.

We left Boulac about one o'clock, with a ſerene ſky, and a heat as temperate as one of our fineſt days of ſpring. The inundation had been over about ſix weeks, and the waters of the Nile inſenſibly decreaſed. The current being rather ſlow, and the north wind blowing,

(*s*) Mahamet Aſſalama, the janiſſary, who accompanied me, was honeſt, brave, and faithful. I had great obligations to him during my travels, and at my departure he entered into the ſervice of the French conſul at Alexandria.

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the men were obliged to take to their oars. Wheat and barley began to ripen. The carthamus and dourra, or Indian millet, were a foot high; and the third crop of lucern was ſpringing; cucumbers and water-melons ſpread their flexible branches over the river banks, and beans were almoſt ripe. The foliage of the trees was verdant, but differently tinctured, and the orange and citron were in flower. Such was the aſpect of the country on the fifteenth of February.

Continuing to row, an hour's paſſage brought us to the mouth of the canal of Adrian, which ran to that of the Red Sea, traverſing the village Kelioub, and paſſing north of Heliopolis. Two leagues lower is the village Sharakania, below which the Nile ſeparates on each ſide the Delta. Here Herodotus and Pomponius Mela placed the ancient city of Cercaſorum (*t*). D'Anville, following Strabo, deſcribes it on the weſtern ſhore of the Nile, at the village *El Arksas*.

We are compenſated for the ſlowneſs with which we advance by the amuſing ſight of boats continually paſſing and repaſſing, and a rich

(*t*) Herodotus, lib. ii. and Mela ſay, that the city of Cercaſorum ſtood near the diviſion of the Nile, on the eaſtern ſhore, where Sharakania now ſtands.

country, various in its productions, and abounding in cattle. Arrived at *Batn el Bakara*, where the Nile divides, we left the branch of Roſetta, and proceeded along that of Damietta. The firſt elbows eaſtward, the ſecond flows north, in a right line, therefore has the greateſt quantity of water, for which reaſon the moſt conſiderable canals are cut from it, as I ſhall ſhow.

The ſun ſets, and our mariners dread paſſing the night oppoſite Dagoua, a ſmall town where thieves harbour. In the time of Father Sicard, a certain *Habib* had eſtabliſhed his tyranny there, and, making preſents to the men in power at Cairo, levied contributions on all paſſengers. The place is ſtill infeſted with pirates, and, laſt year, a large boat, in which were more than thirty Turks, and myſelf, was attacked; our arms and behaviour repelled the enemy, who wanted to plunder, not fight; we therefore determined to caſt anchor oppoſite the ſmall village Zoufeti; and, while the ſervant prepared ſupper, I walked with my janiſſary into a neighbouring wood; each with a pair of piſtols at the girdle, a large ſabre by the ſide, and a double-barrelled muſket on the ſhoulder.

Several rows of trees, planted round a vaſt field,

field, formed a ſemicircular encloſure; the ſides of which reached to the river. About the middle were banks, under ſycamore trees, and on the right and left were pomegranate, palm, tamarind, and orange trees, promiſcuouſly planted, which formed various ſmall groves. Among them grew tufts of *Hennai*, a pleaſing ſhrub, with leaves that dye yellow; the cool graſs, variety of trees, intermingling buſhes, orange and citron flowers, flocks of doves, which ſought an aſylum under the thick foliage, and abundance of cattle brought from grazing, altogether formed a moſt cheerful and animated ſcene, which inſpired thoſe ſweet ſenſations of happineſs that proſpects of bounteous and beautiful nature never fail to produce.

We went up to the huſbandmen's huts, and the women, who were round, immediately retired. The men remained, and, from our dreſs, ſuppoſing we were the officers of ſome Bey, who came to exact contributions, had their fears, which we diſpelled by telling them we only aſked milk, and new-laid eggs. They haſtened to ſupply our wants, and reconducted us to the boat, where, notwithſtanding their friendſhip, we kept ſentinel all night, each mounting guard

in his turn; nothing happened however to trouble our repoſe.

February 16th.

After ſleeping ſome hours, wrapped in my cloak, after the Arabian manner, the noiſe of the departing watermen awakened me. The ſun roſe, and, the dew having fallen plentifully, there was a pure and clear ſky. Looking toward the wood, where we had walked over night, I ſaw flocks of birds, white as ſnow, perched on the tops of the trees, which the Arabs name oxkeeper, becauſe they always accompany theſe animals. They are the ſize of a pheaſant, with red feet, and black beaks; their ſilver plumage formed an agreeable contraſt with the dark green of the date tree. Thouſands of doves flew from one cluſter of trees to another, and, by their cooing, celebrated the birth of day; while flocks of pigeons left their houſes on the river banks; theſe tame birds, never hunted, never terrified by noiſy gun-powder, are without fear, and do not avoid man.

Our anchor weighed, we coaſted the left ſide of the river, aided by the current and the oar; for the wind continued contrary, and paſſed near

near *Caſr* (*u*) Faraounia, ſituated at the beginning of a large canal, which, obliquely traverſing the Delta, falls into the Roſetta branch. On the right of the Nile we perceived various hamlets, loſt in the diſtant horizon, often paſſed numerous iſlands, of which the river is full, and ſoon ſaw the ſmall fort of Tant, ſurrounded by a ſmall canal.

An hour after quitting it we came before the village Dagoua, the retreat of robbers, where the elbowing Nile ſeems willing to detain travellers. From this winding there is a canal cut, as large as the Saone, which runs into the canal of Faraounia before it paſſes Menouf, the capital of the firſt province of the Delta. It is navigable from Auguſt to December, for large boats, and I have rowed entirely up it from Nadir, on the Roſetta branch, to that of Damietta. It runs from north-eaſt to ſouth-weſt, nor can any thing be more cheerful or rich than its banks; which ſeem a terreſtrial paradiſe. This large canal ſupplies others, which I ſhall deſcribe on the map. One of them running to the lake of Bourlos, paſſes the town of Tanta, where there is a conſiderable annual fair, to which the

(*u*) *Caſr* ſignifies village.

inhabi-

inhabitants of the Upper and Lower Egypt come, in crowds, to exchange their native products for India ſtuffs, Moka coffee, and French cloths. It continues a week. Deſire of gain brings ſome of the Egyptians, and love of pleaſure many more. Ten thouſand boats are upon the canal at this ſeaſon, all carrying abundance of proviſions, where are good cheer, muſic, and rejoicing. There are nearly as many tents pitched on ſhore, to which the moſt famous courteſans of Egypt fail not to come. They likewiſe go on board the boats, where they diſplay their talents for dancing, ſinging, and gallantry. Many glaſs lamps are nightly lighted, the repetition of which reflects innumerable ſtars in the waters. The tents have the ſame (*x*), and this wonderful illumination, for the extent of a league, produces, on the graſs and the cryſtal ſtream, charming effects. Theſe fairs, much frequented, are not uncommon. They are the remains of the ancient pilgrimages of the Egyptians to Canopus, Saïs, and Bubaſtus.

Joyfully quitting Dagoua, we paſſed various

(*x*) Herodotus tells us that, at the feaſts of Iſis, in the city of Buſiris, of Diana at Bubaſtus, and in other cities of Egypt, there were like illuminations. lib. ii.

hamlets,

hamlets, and diſcovered, on the right, the village of Atrib (*y*), where there is nothing remarkable but the name, its huts being built over the ruins of the ancient Atribis. Ammianus Marcellinus affirms this was one of the moſt conſiderable cities in Egypt; if ſo, it is aſtoniſhing that not one of its monuments remain. A large canal runs a little below Atrib, toward the eaſtern part of lake Menzala; another, beginning near the angle of the Delta (*z*), fell into it there, and they, together, formed the Peluſiac branch. Following its courſe, we come to Phacuſa, where the canal began, which communicated with the Red Sea, and paſſed the great city of Bubaſtus, where Diana was worſhipped, and in whoſe honour a magnificent temple was there erected This worſhip is deſcribed by Herodotus in a pictureſque manner. I will cite the paſſage, as it will ſerve to prove how little the manners of the Egyptians have changed, ſince that excellent hiſtorian.

(*y*) D'Anville places this town and canal too low.

(*z*) Herodotus, and Pomponius Mela, poſitively ſay the Nile was triple below the town of Cercaſorum, the ſite of which I have indicated, becauſe it divided into three branches. The moſt eaſtern, that of Bubaſtus, or Peluſium, is not navigable; the two others ſtill are.

" The

"The people come in crowds from all parts "of Egypt to the feaſt of Diana, at Bubaſtus; "multitudes of boats row towards the city, in "each of which female ſingers are accompanied "by cymbals, and the tambour de baſque: men "play on the flute, others ſing, and beat time "with their hands. They ſtop oppoſite all the "towns they paſs, and the muſic ſtrikes up. "Women (*a*), abandoning themſelves to ex-"ceſſive mirth, intice, by the moſt unguarded "expreſſions, all they meet; ſing licentious airs, "and perform laſcivious dances. Being come "to Bubaſtus, the people offer up innumerable "ſacrifices, during the feſtival, and drink more "wine in one day than in all the year beſide. "Above ſeven hundred thouſand people aſſem-"ble here."

The Egyptians, ſince Herodotus, have been governed by various nations, and, at length, are ſunk deep in ignorance and ſlavery, but their true character has undergone no change. The frantic ceremonies the pagan religion authoriſed are now renewed around the ſepulchres of Santons (*b*), before the churches of the Copts, and in

(*a*) Theſe, no doubt, are the Almai, who were not then more decent than now.

(*b*) On certain days the Mahometans viſit the ſepulchres of

in the fairs I mentioned (*c*). Their love of pilgrimages ſtill ſubſiſts; their muſic and dances are the ſame; and, though ſhackled by mahometaniſm, their native humours preponderate, and the predilections of their forefathers retain their aſcendency; ſo true is it that old habits, ſpringing from the climate, predominate over laws, like a torrent down a declivity, the courſe of which a legiſlature cannot ſtop, but may turn ſo as not only to prevent its ravages but to render it uſeful.—Let us continue our voyage.

Below Atrib the villages are ſo near each other that the banks of the Nile ſeem a continued town, interrupted only by gardens and aromatic groves. Contemplating the lucid ſky, the variegated trees, the numerous herds, and the ever ſpringing wealth of an inexhauſtible ſoil, we ſay, let us not wonder the Egyptians have produced the moſt marvellous works in the world; they poſſeſſed knowledge, the fineſt of climates, and a country which aſks nothing from man but to ſcatter ſeed over its ſurface. Tyranny and

of perſons they hold to be ſaints, and keep their feſtivals with mirth, banqueting, and licentiouſneſs.

(*c*) Much the ſame do the Copts celebrate the feſtival of Saint Gemiana, in the Lower Egypt.

barba-

barbariſm have ſpread deſolation here; yet, what might not a people, friends of the arts and ſciences, ſtill undertake; what treaſures might they not gain from commerce and agriculture, or what advantages not render ſcience and hiſtory, by the interpretation of the Egyptian hieroglyphics! Excuſe theſe reflections, theſe hopes of a traveller, who beholds the miſery and the wealth of a country ſo beauteous. After four hours paſſing iſlands and hamlets, I landed at Mit rhamr, and walked over this populous trading town, where there is nothing remarkable, nothing that beſpeaks antiquity. The Bazards are narrow and obſcure, the ſtreets crooked and dirty. There is a moſque, with a ſquare tower, which I ſuppoſe to have been a church before the conqueſt of the Arabs, for there is not ſuch a minaret in all Egypt; they being round, ſmall, and high.

Oppoſite Mit rhamr is Zephta, which, croſſing the river, we viſited, and which, like the firſt, was not worth our trouble. The walls of the houſes are, ſome mud, others brick; many of them are ruinous, with nobody to repair them. The inhabitants appear miſerable, and it is viſible that not for them is the fatneſs of the ſurrounding lands.

The

The ſun roſe, and we, continuing our route, ſaw villages in the ſame abundance; much more ſo on this branch than on that of Roſetta; which we muſt attribute to the deſtruction of ſeveral cities, formerly, in the eaſtern part of the Delta. As they became deſolate, the repairing of the canals was neglected, the lands uncultivated, and the people coming nearer the river, have there fixed their habitations. How many barren fields would a good government give back to agriculture! The wind contrary, the rowers fatigued, and night approaching, we caſt anchor between an iſland and Mit Demſis, a place not too ſafe: but we determined to keep good watch.

Feb. 17th.

While we quietly ſlept, two ſwimmers, under favour of darkneſs, approached the boat, toward midnight. Our ſentinel, the janiſſary, perceiving them, by ſtar-light, gave the alarm, and fired his muſket. They diſappeared, and, the noiſe waking us, we ran to arms; but he calmed our fears by informing us of the truth. So adroit are theſe thieves, that, finding the paſſengers aſleep, they ſwim away with a part of their effects, and even with large packets: if ſurpriſed, they dive, and elude purſuit. This alarm kept

us

us awake all night, and, to charm away drowſineſs, Mahomet Aſſalama recounted the battles of Ali Bey, which were enlivened by large cups of Moca coffee, occaſionally emptied by us, and drank here at all hours. The Turks think it braces, and hold it neceſſary in a country where, relaxed by heat, the ſtomach ſcarcely can perform its functions; for this reaſon they call it *Cahouai* (*d*), ſignifying ſtrength. Be this as it may, the Egyptians commonly drink three cups a day, and often much more, without any of the terrible effects European phyſicians hate attributed to coffee.

Slow-coming day at length appeared, and the riſing ſun was more pale than uſual, which betokened a ſouth wind, and which ſoon riſing, we ſet ſail. As we paſſed, we perceived a canal, beginning below Mit Demſis, and taking its courſe towards the lake Menzala. The wind freſhening, our bark, ſwiftly, cut the waves, and we preſently came to the village of Bouſir (*e*), on the weſtern bank of the Nile, two leagues

(*d*) The Arabs call it *Boun*, when in grain, and *Cahouai* when ground. From *Cahouai* the Europeans have formed the word *coffee*.

(*e*) Abulfeda enumerates four cities ſo named in Upper, and

leagues from Semennoud, perfectly according in ſituation with that which Herodotus and Strabo give to the ancient city of Buſiris the capital of a Nomos; prodigious multitudes of people were drawn hither by the ſtately temple, conſecrated to Iſis, the Grecian Ceres, this being one of the moſt frequented pilgrimages of Egypt. Not a veſtige of ancient ſplendour can be ſeen at Bouſir; ſtanding beſide the river, no doubt, the precious marbles of the temple have been carried off; and it may be, alſo, that ſome remains might be found under the huts that have ſince been built there.

A league below Bouſir, we ſaw the mouth of a canal, which, joining an arm of that of Menouf, paſſed near Mehallai, and flowed toward lake Bourlos (*f*). A little farther I perceived

and one in Lower Egypt, which is that I ſpeak of, called, to diſtinguiſh it, *Bouſir Bana.*

Herodotus, lib. ii. and Strabo, lib. xvii. place Buſiris above Sebennytus, now Semennoud, proceeding up the river, which is the preſent poſition of Bouſir.

Strabo, ſpeaking of this place, affirms the fables told of the cruel Buſiris have no foundation whatever, that Egypt never had a king ſo called, and that malice had invented them in return for the inhoſpitality of the Egyptians, who did not love ſtrangers. Lib xvii.

(*f*) So called by mariners, as is the cape which makes its headland.

a ſmall wood, where, in a former voyage, I had landed; and, as the ſituation was charming, I was determined to dine there; accordingly we went on ſhore. A long row of willows of Babylon, ſtrong and tall, extends along the river bank; the flexible branches dip in the waters. Behind theſe are pomegranates, which, planted in quincunx, and forming a pleaſant grove, is ſurrounded by a canal. From the Nile, at the far end, is a field, various in its productions, and terminated by huts, among which was the orange tree in bloom. Seated beneath the willows upon the river bank, before us was an iſland dividing its ſtream, the verdant graſs of which attracted the eye: on the oppoſite ſhore, were the villages Salania, Mit Abulhari, and Gerah, ſeparated only by cluſters of date and orange trees, and ſome fields of pulſe and grain. On the right, Bouſir might juſt be perceived; and, on the left, the town of Semennoud, with its lofty minarets. I never beheld a more agreeable ſituation. The verdure, flowers, foliage, villages, towns, waters, earth, and heavens, all gave pleaſure to the ſight. We dined in this delightful ſpot, where I twice have ſtopped, and twice having felt that involuntary charm, that pure and tranquil content, that expanſion of the ſoul, which the beauties

beauties of nature ſo powerfully excite, by the grateful ſuperabundance ſhe ſheds: happy he, who at ſuch a moment finds a ſympathiſing heart, to which he can communicate, and by the communication inſpire, ſimilar ſenſations. Weſt of this wood, a league and a half, is Mehalla el Kebira, capital of Garbia, the ſecond province of the Delta, and the reſidence of a Bey. This town is called Kebira the Great, becauſe the Delta contains not any more conſiderable. It has a manufactory of cloth, and ſal-ammoniac, and a great trade; the ſurrounding rivers ſerving to tranſport its merchandiſe over all Egypt. The country round contains numerous villages, herds, and the productions of land ever fertile. Mehalla has replaced the cities of Sebennytus and Buſiris, but not their magnificence; it contains no remarkable edifice.

While we tranquilly were ſeated on the river bank, a violent ſouth-eaſt wind roſe, blew a ſtorm, and raiſed clouds of fine and ſcorching duſt, which obſcured the heavens, and ſpread a gloomy paleneſs over the face of nature. This veil of darkneſs, through which the ſun appeared like blood, continued about two hours. When ſuch like whirlwinds ſurpriſe the traveller in the deſert, he ſoon is buried, if not ſhel-

tered by a tent, and, if the tempeſt continues long, even this aſylum becomes his grave; the tent and himſelf both being entombed under a hill of ſand. The wind fell, the ſky cleared, and, gaining our boat, we proceeded to Semennoud.

This was the ancient Sebennytus, the capital of a Nomos; it is a middle-ſized, populous, trading place, where bazards, well ſupplied, afford various commodities, tolerably cheap. Except moſques, all the buildings are of brick; nor could I diſcover any antiquities. Half a league north of Semennoud is the canal of Thebania, carried to the lake Bourlos, near the ruins of Butis the Great (*g*); which city had two temples, dedicated to Apollo and Diana, and was famous alſo for the oracle of Latona, which all Egypt came to conſult. The temple of this goddeſs was vaſt and magnificent, and ſurrounded by a portico fifty feet high, reſting on marble columns; a rock of granite (*h*), its outward

(*g*) Herodotus, Euterpe.

(*h*) This enormous rock, two hundred and forty feet in circumference, was brought from a quarry in the iſle of Philæ, near the cataracts, on rafts, for the ſpace of two hundred leagues, to its deſtined place, and, without contradiction, was the heavieſt weight ever moved by human power.

fur-

ſurface ſixty feet ſquare, formed a ſanctuary, hollowed in it by the mallet and chiſel; and a ſtone of equal ſurface, and ſix feet thick, covered it entirely. No modern travellers have viſited Butis, becauſe it would be exceedingly dangerous: wherefore we cannot affirm the deſcription of Herodotus to be exact: however, having ſeen the column of Alexandria, and other monuments, not leſs ſurpriſing, we are led to believe this hiſtorian, who had been on the ſpot, has not impoſed upon poſterity.

A league and a half from Semennoud, near the canal of Thebania, is a large mount, covered with ruins, called by Pococke, and father Sicard, *Bha Beit*, houſe of beauty; the Turks in my company named it *Hajar Beit*, houſe of ſtone; be this as it may, theſe are the ruins of a grand temple, wholly of marble; the walls, ten feet thick at the bottom, were of red ſpotted granite, found in the quarries of Syene, and which bears a perfect poliſh. The columns, four feet in diameter, had the head of Iſis for their capitals. Among theſe remains are fragments of the fine marble ſtatues which embelliſhed this ſtately edifice. The ſtones are full of hieroglyphics, among which are men with pointed bonnets, youthful women, birds, and various

animals, all admirably ſculptured, excellent in their attitudes, and more pure in their taſte, and perfect, than any other of the Egyptian ſculpture. Theſe fine ruins are abandoned to the Turks, who daily come and carry off blocks of marble, or ſaw columns in pieces to make mill-ſtones.

Pococke and father Sicard agree in ſaying this temple was built by Buſiris, in honour of Iſis; but its ſite does not correſpond with that attributed by Herodotus and Strabo to this city, which, as I have ſaid, ſtood two leagues above Semennoud, where the village of Bouſir now ſtands. I rather think, with D'Anville, the edifice in queſtion was in the city of Iſis itſelf, which Pliny and Stephen of Byzantium placed towards the bottom of the Delta. Were Egypt not ſubject to barbarians, might it be ſearched, many doubts would be removed, which obſcure the ancient hiſtory of the country. After every poſſible aſſiſtance, there are points on which we only can approach, but never dare flatter ourſelves with having attained, the truth.

Returning from our walks toward evening, Mahamet Aſſalamai, to whom ſitting and ſmoaking was a pleaſure a thouſand times ſuperior to all the moſt wondrous ruins of the world, invited

invited me into a coffee-houſe where he heard muſic; and I went the more willingly becauſe, ſpeaking Arabic, I might paſs for a Turk. Being armed, well-dreſſed, and in military habits, we were taken for officers of the janiſſaries, and the trades-people of Semennoud riſing, ceded the place of honour. They ſquatted on matted ſeats, we ſat on a raiſed ſofa, where the maſter of the houſe preſented us himſelf with moka, and lighted our pipes. A dancing girl, who amuſed the company, immediately came to us, and, according to cuſtom, aſſumed the moſt voluptuous geſtures and laſcivious attitudes, keeping time to cymbals, and a tambour de baſque, and receiving applauſe in proportion as her poſtures were ſignificant and indecent; and ſhe was careful to oblige her company. The dance ended, ſeating herſelf by us, ſhe ſang moals in praiſe of the muſſulmen and afterwards chearful airs. This courtezan called herſelf Bedaoui; was fourteen, and of an exquiſite form, which was not concealed by her light ſilk dreſs, negligently tied with a long ſaſh. Her perfumed ebony locks deſcended in treſſes to her heels; a veil, gracefully raiſed, covered her ſhoulders; her eyes were black and fine; her ſkin leſs brown than common; her mouth and

ſmile charming; but, in my opinion, ſhe was disfigured by two blue ſpots ſhe had made in her cheeks with gunpowder, and a ring hanging from one of her noſtrils. She had come from Cairo to ſeek her fortune, and, finding us generous, offered to accompany us during our voyage, which we civilly declined, and returned to ſleep in our boat.

February 18.

Taking good care to lay in proviſions at Semennoud, where are excellent pigeons, poultry, and fine flavoured freſh butter, we departed at day-break, and hoiſted ſail. The wind almoſt eaſt, we hoiſted ſail, and in two hours ſaw the minarets of Manſoura, whither we ſoon came, and, being curious to examine a city ſo famous for the misfortunes of Louis IX. and his fortitude, I landed. It is tolerably large, but unfortified; the ſtreets narrow, and the houſes of brick, as is uſual in the Delta. One part is half in ruins; and here, no doubt, it was that the brave Joinville, who had penetrated thus far, ſo long defended himſelf againſt the Egyptians, and eſcaped, covered with wounds. Here the duke of Britanny loſt an eye; but I ſhall reſerve theſe anecdotes for the ſhort narrative I have promiſed.

Man-

Manſoura is a modern town, the origin of which Abulfeda thus gives (*i*); "King Ka-"mel (*k*), ſon of El Adel, founded Manſoura, "where the Nile divides; one branch running "to Damietta, the other to Achmoun (*l*), as a "bulwark againſt the enemy, who then be-"ſieged Damietta (*m*)."

The Chriſtians of Syria, ſettled at Manſoura (*n*), are the chief traders, and the principal articles are the fine rice growing round the lake, and ſal-ammoniac. Here are vaſt chicken-ovens; and, as Egypt is the only country

(*i*) "Oua el Manſoura benaha el melec, el kamel ebn el "adel, and maſterek el Nil ila doumiat, oua *achmoun* bena-"ha fi ouegg el adou lamma haſerou doumiat."

The above paſſage proves the learned Pococke was miſtaken in ſuppoſing this city the Tanis, or Zoan, of Scripture.

(*k*) The ſeventh of the Ayoubite kings; he died at Damaſcus, in the year 635 of the Hegira.

(*l*) Achmoun was built by the Arabs, near the lake Menzala, and ſometimes called by them Achmoun Tanis, it having replaced the ancient city of Tanis, the ruins of which are ſeen in an iſle of the lake. Achmoun was founded in the reign of Elmetouakkel. *Elmacin.*

(*m*) King Kamel built Manſoura, while the cruſaders laid ſiege to Damietta, thirty-one years prior to the expedition of Louis IX. *Macrizi.*

(*n*) Manſoura, in Arabic, ſignifies the victorious.

where

where this mode of hatching is practiſed, I will deſcribe it.

Imagine a building of two ſtories, one under ground, and the other but little above, equally divided, length-ways, by a narrow gallery; on the right and left are ſmall cells, where the eggs are put; the upper-ſtory is vaulted with an ox-eye aperture at the top, and a ſmaller one on the floor, by which heat is communicated below; both have a ſmall window carefully cloſed, and only one low door for the whole building. The eggs are arranged in heaps in the lower ſtory, and a fire of ſun-dried cow-dung kindled in the upper, morning and night, an hour each. This is repeated for eight days, and, the building being ſufficiently heated, the fire is put out, every aperture cloſed, and a part of the eggs heaped up below are carried above. The ſuperintendant occaſionally examines if it be neceſſary to increaſe or diminiſh the heat. On the nineteenth day the chickens begin to move in their ſhells, nibble with their beaks on the twentieth, endeavouring to break their priſon, and are uſually completely hatched on the twenty-firſt: then do theſe heaps of eggs, apparently lifeleſs, begin to move and roll about the floor, and thouſands of little various coloured chickens to run and hop round

round the apartment. This ſight is truly diverting. They are carried in panniers, and cried about the ſtreets on the morrow, each houſe ſtocking itſelf at a half-penny apiece. Various authors have ſaid theſe fowls are not ſo good as thoſe hatched by the hen, but they are miſtaken. A French cook I ſaw at Grand Cairo bought them every year, and when well fed they became excellent poultry. People here ſay the villagers of Bermai only know the ſecret of this mode of incubation, but this I cannot certify.

Having examined Manſoura, we went to ſee the canal, which, north of the town, is wide, deep, and runs to the lake Menzala, below Achmoun; the paſſing of it was fatal to the French army, and its blood-ſtained waters waſhed away the dead. Our curioſity ſatisfied, we ſet ſail towards evening. The Nile near Manſoura takes another, and a north-eaſt, direction. The country on each ſide is equally fertile, but the villages leſs frequent. We paſſed Diaſt, about duſk, which place is nearly a day's journey from Saint Gemiana, where the Copts go on pilgrimage, and at which time the neighbouring plain is covered with tents. Chriſtians and Mahometans promiſcuouſly feaſt for a week, have horſe races, wine, and good cheer; and, dancing girls coming

ing in crowds, Bacchus and Venus are not baniſhed the feſtival.

Night came on; but darkneſs, neither thick nor impenetrable here, is rather a tranſparent veil, half concealing objects, through which the azure ſerene ſky is ſeen, and all the ſhining hoſt of heaven. The ſtars ſeem brighter and larger than in cooler climates, and night, in Egypt, has a thouſand charms which are rarely felt in Europe. Never is her mild face obſcured by utter darkneſs, never her tranquillity diſturbed by tempeſtuous winds, nor do deſcending torrents ever produce a temporary chaos. When the ſun ſets, the wind uſually falls; nature becomes perfectly calm, and contemplative man may then, untroubled, undiſturbed, ſtudy himſelf and his faculties. Aſtronomy, whoſe reſidence is in the heavens, viewing the ſplendid firmament, may follow the courſe of the ſtars through the immenſity of ſpace.

While ſailing with the ſtream, wandering lights informed us of the approach of boats, going upwards. There was one, that, paſſing, ran foul of us, by which we were near being ſunk. We immediately made for ſhore to examine if there was no leak, where we reſolved to paſs the night. This accident happened near the

the ſmall village of Saoualim, and this was the ſecond time that place had almoſt proved fatal to me, as I will ſhow, for the inſtruction of thoſe whom curioſity may bring to Egypt.

The year before, I ſailed from Cairo, with a French officer, who was going to embark, at Damietta, for India, by the way of Baſſora: we had only one ſervant, and three mariners; and this officer, during the voyage, opened and counted a box of ſequins. This, as I told him, was putting our lives in danger, but he diſregarded me. The ſailors, ſeeing the gold, conſpired to have us murdered, which they could not execute the two firſt nights, we being on our guard. A contrary wind forcing us to lie-to, on the third, one of them went to a neighbouring hamlet, and, an hour after, returning, lay down to reſt with the others. The fatigue of heat, and long watching, overcame us, and I had ſlept ſoundly about an hour when I felt as if ſuddenly ſhaked, and was perfectly awake, without knowing how. The moon ſhone bright, and the firſt object I beheld was a man, with one foot in the boat, and an uplifted poniard. I ran to my double barrelled muſket, and clapping it to his breaſt, cried, in Arabic, he was dead if he did not retire. The fellow ſtood motionleſs,

with

with ſurpriſe; and I, inſtantly, perceived, a few paces further, three others, armed with ſabres and piſtols; I watched their motions, and determined to fire on the firſt who offered the leaſt threat; but durſt not turn my head to wake my companion, leſt they ſhould attack me. Him whom I held in play having drawn back, I awakened the officer, who armed himſelf, and while the thieves held council, two paces from us, I let ſlip the boat, and we paſſed to the other ſide of the river. During this whole ſcene, the boatmen and ſervant feigned to be in a dead ſleep, nor could my calling awaken them; blows were neceſſary for that. When I came to Damietta, I perceived the raſcals had ſtolen ſeveral of my effects, but the fear of the baſtinado compelled reſtoration. Eſcaped this danger, I returned thanks to providence, who permitted me to awake ſo ſeaſonably; two minutes more would have been too late.

19th.

The remembrance of the paſt made us watch all night; but the precaution was needleſs; we remained undiſturbed. Our boat having been only ſlightly damaged, above water, we departed, betimes, paſſed Fareſcour, and, two hours after,

after, diſcovered the charming town of Damietta, forming a vaſt creſcent on the eaſtern ſhore of the Nile. Numerous boats and ſmall veſſels were at anchor there, and we proceeded to the cuſtom-houſe.

I have the honour to be, &c.

LET-

LETTER XXIII.

Hiſtory of Damietta, ancient and modern; when founded; their ſite; travellers refuted who have all confounded or miſplaced them in their maps and narratives. Modern Damietta; its extent, trade, baths, inhabitants, and charming environs, bowers, and orange groves; with an account of the lotus, papyrus, and the fine rice, ſent from Damietta to Syria, the Archipelago, and Marſeilles.

To M. L. M.

Grand Cairo.

MOST writers have confounded the ancient with the modern Damietta; ſo obſcure, ſir, is its hiſtory; and the repetition of their errors has thrown great darkneſs and uncertainty over this important point of Egyptian geography, to diſpel which it is neceſſary to begin with the famous Damietta, ſo often attacked by European princes. A knowledge of places, dates, and facts, preſented under their true light, will give you clear and diſtinct ideas. "Damietta," ſays Abul-

Abulfeda (*o*), "was a walled town, at the eaſt-
"ern mouth of the Nile (*p*)." This perfectly accords with hiſtory: let us therefore ſearch for the origin of the place. Stephen of Byzantium informs us it was called Thamiatis, under the government of the Lower Empire, but was, then, inconſiderable. It daily increaſed in proportion as Peluſium, frequently ſacked, declined; and the entire ruin of that ancient city removed commerce to the eaſt of the Delta. The emperors of Conſtantinople, a ſecond time, ſeiſed on Damietta, then unfortified, about the year 238 of the Hegira. But the importance of a maritime town, ſo favourably ſituated, was at length ſeen; and, ſix years after, the caliph Elmetouakkel (*q*) ſurrounded it with ſtrong walls; which,

(*o*) Oua doumiat canet medina meſaoura ala el bahr and meſaab el Nil el ſharki. Deſcription of Egypt.

(*p*) Called the eaſtern mouth, by the Arabian geographer, becauſe, Peluſium having been often ſacked, and at laſt deſtroyed, by the cruſaders, the canals that ran to it became unfrequented, and the branch of Damietta the moſt eaſtern.

(*q*) Great works were performed in Egypt during his reign, ſuch as finiſhing the walls of Alexandria, Damietta, founding Achmoun, Roſetta, Catayah, &c. all executed by order of Ebn Toulon, one of the moſt famous governors of this country, and who, ambitious and thirſting to become independent,

which, however, did not impede the valiant Roger, king of Sicily, from taking it, in the year 550 of the Hegira. Salah Eddin, who began to reign over Egypt about this time, did not let him long enjoy his conqueſt, but drove the Europeans from Damietta, who, fifteen years after, returned again to beſiege it. Their efforts were ineffectual, for, though their land army was ſuſtained by a fleet of twelve hundred veſſels (*r*), the ſultan forced them to retire with ſhame.

This place was fated to be continually beſieged. Again the cruſaders attacked it, with powerful forces, under the reign of El Addel, in the year 615 of the Hegira. They landed on the weſtern ſhore of the Nile, and ſecured their camp by a foſſe, and a paliſade. The mouth of the river was defended by two towers, well garriſoned; and a chain of iron, ſtretched acroſs, prevented the entrance of veſſels. The cruſaders took the tower, next their camp, broke

dependent, wiſhed to poſſeſs fortified places, in which he might brave the power of the caliphs. Theſe having obtained, he reared the ſtandard of rebellion, declared himſelf king of Egypt, and defended it againſt the whole force of Aſia.

(*r*) Macrizi, Hiſtory of the Dynaſties of Egypt.

the

the chain, and gave a paſſage to their fleet. Nejem Eddin (*s*), the ſon of the ſultân, encamped near Damietta, covered it with an army, and, to ſtop the enemy's veſſels, threw a bridge over the Nile, which they deſtroyed; he then ſunk ſeveral large barks, and rendered the paſſage almoſt impracticable. After many turns of fortune, bloody battles, and a ſiege of ſeventeen months, the chriſtian princes took Damietta by aſſault, but did not long enjoy the fruit of all the blood they had ſpilt, and an armament which had coſt ſums ſo immenſe. Surrounded, near the canal (*t*) of Achmoun, by the waters of the Nile, and the Egyptian army, they bought their lives and liberty by reſtoring their conqueſt.

Thirty-one years after their defeat, Louis IX. took Damietta, without ſtriking a blow. The daring valour of a king who threw himſelf armed into the water to march againſt an enemy entrenched on ſhore, and the impetuoſity with

(*s*) This valiant prince, then very young, made his firſt campaigns againſt the Europeans, gained ſeveral victories, afterward, over the rebels of Syria, and died, at Manſoura, ſome time after Louis IX. took Damietta.

(*t*) A quarter of a league north of Manſoura, where ended the exploits of Louis IX.

which he attacked them, ſpread terror through their army, which, flying, cowardly abandoned a fortreſs amply ſtored and capable of long reſiſtance. The Arabs, ſoon after, recovered it, as I ſhall ſhow in the hiſtory of the deſcent of Louis IX. but, weary of defending a place which brought upon them the moſt warlike nations of Europe, they wholly eraſed and re-built it, higher up the country, as Abulfeda and all the oriental writers atteſt. I will cite their moſt important paſſages.

"Damietta being deſtroyed, they built a town "at ſome diſtance, and called it Menſhia, which "is become a conſiderable place, where now "(a hundred years after it was founded) are "ſquares, bazards, and public baths. The an-"cient city was deſtroyed in the year 648 of "the Hegira (*u*); the woes it had brought on "Muſſulmen, and the wars it had excited, re-"duced them to this neceſſity. This fortreſs, "ſeeming to invite the arms of the Franks who "came to beſiege it in turns, Elmetouakkel, "an Abaſſide caliph, had walled it round."

Macrizi, confirming the opinion of Abulfeda, removes all doubt. I will tranſcribe the paſ-

(*u*) Other Arabian writers place it four years back.

ſage,

ſage, as tranſlated by the learned Cardonne; for a fact diſfigured by the errors of ſo many travellers requires full demonſtration.

" Two years after the departure of Louis IX. " under the reign of Moaz Eddin Aybeh, the " Turcoman, firſt Sultan of the dynaſty of the " Baharite Mamluks, a report being ſpread that " the French threatened Egypt a ſecond time, " it was reſolved to deſtroy Damietta, and the " place was raſed, ſo that not a veſtige remain- " ed, except the grand moſque (x). Nor was " this thought ſufficient; for, eleven years af- " ter, under the reign of Bibar Elbondouk Da-

(x) A grand moſque is ſtill ſeen at the village of Eſba, eaſt of the Nile, a ſhort league from the ſea, whither I have been ten times, carefully examined the environs, and ſaw the foundations of the walls of ancient Damietta. There was alſo an arch of brick, of old conſtruction, which might be one end of a bridge, an antique tower, half demoliſhed, where were two cannons without carriages, and ruins, which make its ſituation indubitable. The diſtance of Eſba from the ſea is what the Delta has lengthened in the ſpace of 600 years: this has obliged the Mamluks to raiſe two ſmall forts beyond the village, to defend the paſſage of the river. That on the left ſhore is already half a league inland; the other, more modern, will ſoon be the ſame; for the ſhore on which it is built runs three leagues into the ſea, and, being now almoſt as high as the water, in leſs than a century will form a cape.

" ri, they ſo ſtopped up the mouth of the Nile(*y*) " that the enemy's fleet could not enter; " ſince when the paſſage is ſo obſtructed that " ſhips are obliged to anchor in the road. The " preſent Damietta was built after the former " was deſtroyed, and ſtands on the ſame ſide, " higher up the river."——it is in reality a league and a half above the village of Eſba, where traces of the firſt Damietta are ſeen. The modern, Abulfeda tells us, was called Menſhia, and it ſtill contains a ſquare, ſo named, in memory of its origin. Moſt writers have confounded the two cities, attributing to the one what appertained to the other. The note (*z*) will ſhow what great authorities have obſcured this part of hiſtory and geography. I paſſed fourteen months at the modern Damietta, which I will deſcribe. Larger and not leſs agreeable than Roſetta, it forms a ſemicircle, on the eaſtern ſhore of the Nile,

(*y*) By theſe means a fearful bar has riſen, named Bogaz, not leſs dangerous than that of Roſetta, and impaſſable by boats during ſeveral months of the year. Shipwrecks are frequent here; I have four times paſſed it, but not without peril.

(*z*) Father Sicard ſays, " The lake Menzala began half a " league from Damietta, formerly Thamiatis." *Let. Ed. p.* 340.—The Damietta he means is not the ancient Thamiatis.

Pococke,

Nile, two leagues and a half from its mouth. Standing at one end of this creſcent, the eye ſurveys it in its whole extent. It contains about

Pococke, having ſpoken of modern Damietta, adds, "At "the north end of Damietta, there is a very fine large round "tower, built of hewn ſtone, which might be the work of "the Mamluks, after they recovered Damietta from the "Chriſtians."——The learned Engliſhman confounds the city the Egyptians deſtroyed with the preſent.

Proſper Alpinus falls into a much greater error in ſuppoſing Damietta the ancient Peluſium. Damietta is two and twenty leagues from the ruins of Peluſium.

Maillet has committed the ſame fault. "The city of Da-"mietta correſponds to the ancient Peluſium, which projected "into the ſea half a league."

Deſ. d' Egypte, p. 127.

Doctor Shaw, copying Maillet, has adopted his error.

Niebuhr, who has given an excellent plan of Damietta, alſo, confounds it with the ancient, as the following paſſage ſhows. "I find not the leaſt trace of the walls of Damietta, "but the place where it is pretended the Nile was barred "by a chain, ſeems viſible. For, on the northern part with-"in the city, is an old high tower; the river, there, is lit-"tle more than a hundred feet wide [he is greatly deceived], "and, on the oppoſite ſhore, is a like tower, the upper part "of which is now demoliſhed." *Travels in Arabia, Vol. I.*

Theſe towers, which made him take the modern for the ancient Damietta, were built by the Mamluks, to defend the new city. Finding them uſeleſs, they have demoliſhed one, and employed the materials in conſtructing a ſmall fort, at the mouth of the river.

eighty thouſand inhabitants, has ſeveral ſquares, one of which is called Menſhia: bazards, filled with merchandiſe, okals, or khans, as ſpacious as thoſe of Boulac, under the porticos of which are Indian ſtuffs, ſilks from Mount Lebanon, ſal-ammoniac, and quantities of rice, beſpeak it a commercial place. The houſes, eſpecially near the river, are very high; moſt of them have pleaſant ſaloons, built on the terraces, in which charming places, open to every wind, the Turk, indolently ſeated on his ſofa, paſſes his life, in ſmoaking, viewing the ſea, bounded by the horizon, the grand lake lying on the other ſide, and the Nile, which, running between the two, traverſes a rich country. Various grand moſques, with high minarets, ornament the city. The public baths faced with marble, are ſimilar to thoſe of Grand Cairo; the linen is clean, and the water very pure. The heat, and proceſs, far from injuring, conduces to, and even re-eſtabliſhes health, when uſed with moderation: this opinion, founded on experience, is general in Egypt; and the obſervations of ſeveral years, and the aſtoniſhing effects produced by the practice, have obliged me to think them very ſalutary.

Multitudes of boats and ſmall veſſels inceſſantly

ly fill the port of Damietta. Some, named ſherm, ſerve to load and unload the ſhips, that anchor in the road; others are coaſting pilot-boats. There is a great trade between this city and Syria, Cyprus, and Marſeilles. The rice *mezelaoui*, the fineſt of Egypt, is cultivated in the neighbouring plains, and its annual exportation amounts to between two and three hundred thouſand pounds. There are likewiſe cloths, ſal-ammoniac, wheat, &c. Laws, ruinous to the country, prohibit the exportation of the latter: but they are evaded, and it is paſſed as rice. The chriſtians of Aleppo and Damaſcus, for many ages eſtabliſhed here, carry on the principal trade; they are ſuffered to grow rich by Turkiſh indolence, which contents itſelf with occaſional extortions. Exportation of rice is forbidden; but, by arrangements advantageous to the receiver of the cuſtoms, the people of Provence annually load ſeveral ſhips. The bogaz prevents them from entering the Nile, and their cargoes are brought by boats, which practice is productive of innumerable vexations and abuſes. The rice of the beſt quality, which departs in the evening for the ſhip, ſeldom arrives there, but an inferior ſort is ſubſtituted during the night. The captains of Marſeilles, aware of theſe tricks, but unable

unable to prevent them, endeavour to repel fraud by fraud, and traffic becomes a kind of mutual robbery. The thing moſt diſadvantageous to the trade of Damietta is its defective harbour: the road where veſſels lie being totally expoſed, every gale that riſes, the captains are obliged to ſlip their cables, and take refuge at Cyprus, or keep the open ſea. By cutting a canal of half a league only it would be eaſy to give ſhips free entrance into the Nile, which is deep; and this ſmall expence would render Damietta a fine harbour: but deſpotiſm, inſenſible to the good of nations, always marches towards deſtruction, and has neither will nor power to create. How ſtrange the fatality, by which the fineſt country on earth is become the deſtined prey of a few robbers, who ſport with public utility and the lives of men!

The ſlip of land where Damietta is built, ſhut in on one ſide by the river, and on the other by the lake Menzala, is only from two to ſix miles wide eaſt and weſt. Rivulets interſect it in every direction, and render it the moſt fruitful part of Egypt. The rice in common yields eighty buſhels for one, and other products are in the ſame proportion. Here nature, eminently and profuſely diſplaying her riches and her

pomp,

pomp, preſents, the year round, flowers, fruits, and harveſts! She withers not in winter; ſhe fades not in ſummer! She is neither ſcorched nor frozen! The thermometer only varies from the ninth degree above freezing to the twenty-fourth (*a*); which happy temperature Damietta owes to the vaſt quantities of water by which it is ſurrounded. The thermometer riſes twelve degrees higher at Grand Cairo. Verdure is no where ſo freſh as here; trees no where ſo loaded with fruit. The banks among the rice fields bear ſeveral ſpecies of reeds, ſome of which grow very high; among them is the calamus in abundance, with which the orientals write. Its ſmall ſtalk bears long narrow leaves, gracefully pendent, and pliant branches, bedecked with white flowers. There have I ſeen the papyrus in quantities, the paper of the ancient Egyptians. This triangular ruſh, eight or nine feet high, and an inch thick, bears a lanigerous tuft. Strabo calls it biblus (*b*), and deſcribes it ſo as not

(*a*) According to an entire year's obſervations, but only continued during the day, the cold is not much greater at night; for froſt and ſnow are here unknown.—*The author always means Reaumur's thermometer.* T.

(*b*) The papyrus grows naturally in Lower Egypt; I have ſeen

not to be miſtaken. The lotus alſo, which the Arabs call by the primitive name of nuphar, here raiſes its proud ſtalk above the waters, expands its large calyx of light azure, or the pureſt white, and appears the king of aquatic plants. The inland ponds and canals abound with this ſtately flower, which yields a moſt agreeable odour.*

There are many villages round Damietta; moſt of them have manufactories, where the fineſt Egyptian cloth is made, particularly napkins, much in requeſt, at the ends of which are ſilk fringe: they are brought to table, eſpecially on viſits of ceremony; the ſlave preſents one to wipe the mouth after drinking ſherbet (*c*), or

ſeen it on the banks of lake Mareotis; it is a ruſh, with a naked ſtalk ten feet high, bearing a woolly tuft. The publicans (receivers of the cuſtoms) who farm this branch of trade, only ſuffer it to grow in few places, that they may raiſe the price, and thus injure the public good. Strabo, lib. xvii.

The preſent ſcarcity of the papyrus in Egypt is owing to this avidity of the publicans, and the care with which they deſtroyed it. I have only ſeen it round Damietta and the lake Menzala; and moſt travellers, who have not been there, have not mentioned it: ſome, leſs circumſpect, have denied its exiſtence, and propagated fables on the ſubject.

(*c*) Sherbet comes from the Arabic word *ſhorba*, which ſignifies

or eating confectionary, ſerved on a ſilver plate. Round theſe villages uſually are ſmall woods, where the trees, planted promiſcuouſly, have an uncommon and pictureſque effect. Beſide the ſycamore and gloomy tamarind, the elegant caſſia grows, with cluſtering yellow flowers, reſembling thoſe of the cytiſus; the top of the date, loaded with cluſters, lords it above the bower, and near its ſhade the citron and orange riſe, or over the peaſant's cottage extend their golden fruit. The long-leaved banana, the ſcarlet flowered pomegranate, and the ſweet-fruited fig, ſcatter charming variety: often ſtraying among their meandering paths, ſhaded on one ſide by trees, and on the other by cluſtering reeds, impervious to ſight, I have unexpectedly found myſelf on the banks of the great lake Menzala. Here a different proſpect roſe: thouſands of boats were employed in fiſhing, or ſpreading nets, for the innumerable birds which come hither in ſearch

ſignifies beverage. It is compoſed of lemon-juice, ſugar, and water, in which perfumed paſte is diſſolved, made from the excellent fruits of Damaſcus; they uſually mingle a little roſe-water. It is a moſt agreeable beverage, the nectar of the orientals, and drank only by the great, or people in office. I was ſeveral times preſented with it on my viſits to the governor of Damietta, and drank it with pleaſure.

of

of abundant food, and a temperate climate.—I wiſh, Sir, to paint nature ſuch as I have a thouſand times ſeen her round Damietta; but I feel myſelf unequal to the taſk. Imagine all the delights that running brooks and freſh verdure, all the odour that orange flowers, all that a mild ſuavity, a balſamic air, and a moſt enchanting horizon can impart, and you will then have but a feeble idea of the ſmall ſlip of earth included between this expanſive lake and the ever flowing Nile.

A mile ſouth-weſt of the town is an orange grove, to which the inhabitants reſort, where the walks are made ſtraight; and this is the only place where art has any way aided nature; no where elſe are the trees planted in rows: here I almoſt daily went, eſpecially during February, March, and April, when the orange is in flower. No words can expreſs the pleaſure of breathing the cool and perfumed air of theſe delightful ſhades. The unmutilated trees are above thirty feet high, and their intermingled branches, and thick foliage, all in bloom from top to bottom, wholly exclude the ſun's rays. Each orange-tree is a vaſt noſegay, the flowers of which almoſt conceal the leaves, forming together the moſt beauteous canopy ever beheld!

There

There is a ſmall rivulet beſide each row, and twice a day a reſervoir is opened, by which the trees are watered. It is intoxication of pleaſure to walk here at noon: and never did I ſo forcibly feel all the delicious enjoyments that odours and aromatics can inſpire. Here, in theſe hot climates, was I convinced that ſuch ſweets, far from injuring, are even neceſſary to health.

At one end of this walk is a canal, full of the papyrus. Entering, on the left ſtands the gardener's hut, and a grove of citron and palm-trees, planted ſo near each other as ſcarcely to grant admiſſion. This place, incloſed by ditches and paliſades, is the aſylum of myſtery, where the handſomeſt of the Turkiſh women occaſionally come to breathe, ſay they, balſamic ſweetneſs beneath theſe ſhades.

I ſhall conclude this letter, Sir, by a ſhort tale, which will prove that incidents ſimilar to thoſe of the times of Jacob are ſtill renewed in Egypt. The plains of Syria laſt year were ravaged by clouds of locuſts, which devoured the corn to the very root. A famine followed, and a farmer near Damaſcus felt the effects of the general diſtreſs. To ſupply the wants of a numerous family, he ſold his cattle; which reſource

ſource being ſoon exhauſted, the unhappy father, wretched at preſent, but foreſeeing greater wretchedneſs to come, preſſed by hunger, ſold his inſtruments of huſbandry at Damaſcus. Led by the inviſible hand of Providence, as formerly Tobias was by the angel, while he bargained for corn, lately arrived from Damietta, he heard ſpeak of the ſucceſs of Mourad Bey (*d*), who had entered Grand Cairo victorious, and in triumph. The ſhape, character, and origin, of the warrior were deſcribed, and how he had riſen from ſlavery to power ſupreme. The aſtoniſhed farmer found the deſcription accorded with a ſon, who had been ſtolen from him at twelve years old: hope palpitated in his heart; he haſtened home with his proviſions, told his family what he had heard, and determined, immediately, to depart for Epypt. His weeping wife and ſons offered up prayers for his ſafe re-

(*d*) Mourad Bey and Ibrahim Bey have, for ſeveral years, been the moſt powerful ſangiaks of Egypt: both being ambitious, they quarrelled, made war, and were reconciled, becauſe they found themſelves equally ſtrong. Mourad Bey at length prevailed; and, forcing his colleague to fly into Upper Egypt, now reigns in Cairo. In the courſe of theſe letters I ſhall trace their characters and principal actions, which I myſelf have ſeen.

turn.

turn. Going to the port of Alexandretta, he embarked there, and came to Damietta. One continued fear tormented him; his ſon, forſaking the religion of his fathers, had embraced Mahometaniſm; and now, ſurrounded as he was by ſplendor, would he acknowledge his parent? The thought lay heavy on his heart; yet, the wiſh to ſnatch his family from all the horrors of famine, the hope of finding a long lamented ſon, gave him fortitude. He continued his journey, came to the capital, repaired to the palace of Mourad, applied to the officers of the prince, and, moſt ardently, ſolicited admiſſion. His dreſs and appearance beſpoke poverty and misfortune, and were poor recommendations; but his great age, ſo reſpectable in the eaſt, pleaded in his behalf. One of the attendants went to the Bey, and told him an aged man, apparently miſerable, requeſted an audience. Let him enter, replied Mourad; and the farmer proceeded, with trembling ſteps, over the rich carpet which beſpread the hall of the Divan, and approached the Bey, who reclined on a ſofa, embroidered with ſilk and gold. Crowding ſenſations deprived him of the uſe of ſpeech: at laſt, after attentively looking, the voice of nature vanquiſhing fear, he fell, and

embracing his knees, exclaimed, "*You are my ſon!*" The Bey raiſed him, endeavoured to recollect, and, after explanation, finding him to be his father, made him ſit down by his ſide, and careſſed him moſt affectionately. The firſt guſh of nature over, the ſire deſcribed in what a deplorable ſtate he had left his mother and brethren, and the prince propoſed to ſend for, and with them divide his riches and power, if they would embrace Iſlamiſm. This the generous Chriſtian had foreſeen, and, fearing youth might be dazzled, took not one of his ſons with him. He, therefore, firmly rejected Mourad's offer, and even remonſtrated with him on his own change of religion. The Bey, finding his father determined, and that his family's diſtreſs demanded immediate ſuccour, ſent him back to Syria, with a large ſum of money, and a veſſel loaded with corn. The happy huſbandman immediately returned to the plains of Damaſcus, where his arrival baniſhed miſery and tears from his homely roof, and brought joy, eaſe, and felicity.

This, you perceive, Sir, greatly reſembles the hiſtory of Joſeph; and would more, perhaps, did we know all the incidents.

I have the honour to be, &c.

LET-

LETTER XXIV.

On ancient Peluſium, unknown to modern travellers; its ſituation and decline; with remarks on Farama, not far from it, where the Arabs place a tomb, which, probably, is that of Pompey the Great. The lake Tanis, now Menzala, its iſles and ancient towns, with obſervations on its fiſhery, outlets into the Mediterranean, and innumerable birds.

To M. L. M.

Grand Cairo.

PELUSIUM, as I have ſaid, ſtood at the eaſtern extremity of the lake Menzala; its name, ſignifying mud (*e*), deſcribes its marſhy ſituation, which, according to Strabo (*f*), was but two miles from the ſea. Its origin, like that of moſt ancient cities of Egypt, is too remote to be known; it flouriſhed long before Herodotus,

(*e*) Πηλουσιον means mud: the Arabs have continued the name, and called it *Thineh*, mud.

(*f*) Strabo, lib. xvii.

and, being a barrier city towards Aſia, the Pharaohs made it a conſiderable fortreſs: one of them raiſed a rampart, extending thirty leagues, from its walls to Heliopolis. Hiſtory ſhows us that the long wall of China, thoſe which the Greek emperors built round Conſtantinople, and many others, were moſt expenſive, but impotent obſtructions to a warlike people; and that, to ſecure a ſtate, warriors are better than walls: men are only to be repelled by men. The bulwark of Peluſium ſtopped not Cambyſes, who attacked it with a formidable army; and the feeble ſon of Amaſis, not foreſeeing the deſertion of two hundred thouſand Egyptians, who went and founded a colony beyond the cataracts, had no force ſufficient to oppoſe the torrent which ravaged his kingdom. Cambyſes, after a bloody battle, in which his enemies were ſlaughtered, entered Peluſium triumphant; and, from this memorable day, which ſaw the deſertion of one part of the military of Egypt, and the ruin of the other, we may date the ſervitude of that rich land, which has ſince paſſed under the yoke of the Perſians, Macedonians, Romans, Greeks, Arabs, and Turks. A ſtate of ſlavery of more than two thouſand years ſeems to have made her chains eternal.

Hero-

Herodotus, who was at Peluſium ſome years after its conqueſt by Cambyſes, has a paſſage which I muſt not omit. "I examined the plain, "where the two armies had fought, and ſaw "it covered with heaps of human bones: on "the one ſide were thoſe of the Perſians, on "the other thoſe of the Egyptians, the natives "having carefully ſeparated them, after the "battle. Were it not for the explanation I re- "ceived, there was one fact which would have "appeared very aſtoniſhing. The thin and fra- "gile ſkulls of the Perſians broke, when gently "ſtruck with a ſtone; while thoſe of the Egyp- "tians, thick and compact, reſiſted the ſtrokes "of the flint. This difference of ſolidity they "attributed to the cuſtom the Perſians have, "from their infancy, of wearing tiaras (caps), "and the contrary one, of the Egyptians, of "ſhaving their children's heads, and leaving "them bare, expoſed to the heat of the ſun: "which explanation appeared ſatisfactory (*g*)."

The ſame cuſtom ſtill ſubſiſts; I have every where ſeen the children of the common people, whether running in the fields, aſſembled round the villages, or ſwimming in the waters, with

(*g*) Herodotus, Thalia.

their heads ſhaved, and bare. Let us but imagine the hardneſs a ſkull muſt acquire, thus expoſed to the ſcorching ſun, and we ſhall not be aſtoniſhed at the remark of Herodotus. Peluſium paſſed from the Perſian dominion to that of Alexander; and the brave Antony, general of the horſe under Gabinius, took it from his ſucceſſors. Rome reſtored it to Ptolemy Auletes. Pompey the Great, whoſe power had reeſtabliſhed this young prince on the throne of Egypt, ſought refuge, after the fatal battle of Pharſalia, in Peluſium. He landed at the entrance of the harbour, and, quitting Cornelia his wife, and ſons, recited from Sophocles this paſſage—"The free man, who ſeeks an aſylum "in the court of a king, there meets ſlavery "and chains." He there met death! Scarcely had he ſtepped on ſhore before the rhetorician Theodorus, a native of Chio, the courtier Septimius, and the eunuch Achillas, who commanded the troops, deſirous of a victim for the conqueror, pierced him with their ſwords. Seeing the aſſaſſins come, Pompey hid his face in his mantle, and died like a Roman. His head was embalmed, as an offering for Cæſar, and his body caſt naked on the ſhore! Thus was this great man, whoſe warlike talents had made the Romans

Romans free of the ſeas, and added kingdoms to their empire, baſely ſlain, landing on the territories of a king who owed to him his crown! His freedman, Philip, favoured by darkneſs, collected the wreck of a boat, and, taking off his mantle to inwrap the melancholy remains of his maſter, burnt the body, as was the cuſtom. An old ſoldier, who had ſerved under Pompey, mingling his tears with thoſe of Philip, aſſiſted him in paying theſe laſt duties to the manes of his general.

Peluſium had often been taken and pillaged in the wars of the Romans, Greeks, and Arabs; yet ſtill preſerved its commerce and wealth till the time of the Cruſades. After taking it by aſſault, the Chriſtian princes ſacked it; and no more riſing from its ruins, its inhabitants, as I have ſaid, removed to Damietta.

Farama, founded by the Arabs, ſomewhat eaſt of Peluſium, ſucceeded it, but did not long ſubſiſt, for it was ruinous in the thirteenth century. Abulfeda (*h*), citing Ebn Haukal, ſays, here was the tomb of Galen. He is miſtaken: this celebrated phyſician was buried at Pergamus,

(*h*) Deſcription of Egypt.

his native place (*i*). The mauſoleum Abulfeda mentions muſt be that of Pompey, which Pliny places ſome diſtance from Mount Caſius (*k*). Abulfeda adds, citing Ebn Said, that the iſthmus of Suez is only twenty-three leagues wide, in this part, and that Amrou intended to have cut a canal that ſhould have communicated with the two ſeas, but was prevented by Omar, who, wanting a marine, feared to give the Greek ſhips a paſſage into his ſtates. This enterpriſe, though great, would probably have been executed by the man who conquered Egypt, and dug a navigable canal from the Nile to the Red Sea.

Leaving the Peluſiac branch, and proceeding weſtward along the ſea-ſhore, we come to the Tanitic mouth, ſo named from Tanis, a conſider-

(*i*) Galen, after ſtudying phyſic at Alexandria, came, at the age of thirty-four, to Rome, where his learning and talents ſoon made him known. Marcus Aurelius, a judge of merit, appointed him his phyſician, which he afterwards was to two of his ſucceſſors. Weary of the court, Galen retired to Pergamus, his native place; where, paſſing the remainder of his life in calm philoſophy, he died, aged ſixty-three.

(*k*) Plin. Hiſt. Nat. lib. v. cap. 12. The ruins of Farama are near Mount Caſius, and the tomb mentioned by Ebn Haukal ſeems to be that of Pompey.

able

able city built on an iſland of the lake, and the capital of a Nomos. It flouriſhed under Auguſtus (*l*), but Abulfeda informs us it was deſtroyed, in his time, and had become uncultivated and forſaken.

Several fiſhermen have aſſured me, during my ſtay at Damietta, they had ſeen marble columns and ruins of grand edifices in an iſland of the lake. I intended to have viſited them, but on account of the great expenſe of ſuch a voyage, in purchaſing permiſſion of the governor, and obtaining one of his officers and ſome janiſſaries to accompany me, I was obliged to renounce this project. May ſome one richer than myſelf, or aided by government, ſearch this grand lake, obſerve the depth of its mouths, deſcribe the antiquities it contains, and perform what no modern travellers have undertaken!

After the Tanitic comes the Mendeſian mouth, ſo named from the ancient city of Mendes (*m*), famous for its temple, and the indecent ceremonies of the goat, the origin of which was this, according to Herodotus (*o*): "Hercules ar-

(*l*) Strabo, lib. xvii.

(*m*) An Egyptian word, ſignifying goat. Herodotus.

(*o*) Lib. ii.

"dently

" dently intreated Jupiter would ſhow himſelf " to him; which, deaf to his prayer, the god " refuſed. At length, overcome by his inter- " ceſſions, he conſented, on condition it ſhould " be in the form of a goat; and, covering him- " ſel with the ſkin of that animal, he appeared " to the hero. The Egyptians, to preſerve the " memory of this event, repreſent Jupiter with " the head of a goat. . . . . When the ſacred " animal dies, the Mendeſian province obſerves " a general mourning." Decency forbids me to cite the remainder of this paſſage; thoſe who deſire to know how far the phrenſy of bigotry may carry an ignorant and ſuperſtitious populace, may conſult the original.

The traveller who would find the ruins of Mendes, muſt, according to Herodotus and Strabo, ſeek them not far from the canal of Achmoun, on the banks of the lake Menzala.

Before we come to the Phatmetic branch, I have deſcribed a new one on the map, not noticed by any geographer, which I obſerved in a voyage I made thither when the Nile was high. It is about a hundred and fifty feet wide, the current tolerably ſtrong, but I know not if it be deep, or be not dry a part of the year. It is a natural channel which the waters of the lake

have

have opened into the ſea, into which a part of the river might eaſily be turned to give paſſage to veſſels. A league farther is the Phatmetic branch, now that of Damietta: here the Delta begins, and cape Bourlos, near the Sebennytic mouth, forms the headland. It is terminated by the Roſetta, formerly the Bolbitine branch; and, anciently, extended to the Canopic branch, which falls into the ſea, near Aboukir. Theſe are the ſeven mouths of the Nile, ſung by the poets (*p*), which once were all navigable, and which only thoſe of Roſetta and Damietta now are; ſome of them might again be opened, but, in the preſent feeble condition of Egypt, they ſeem more diſpoſed to ſhut than to open their ports to ſtrangers.

It remains for me to ſay ſomething concerning the great lake, whoſe banks we have been coaſting. Strabo (*q*) and the Arabian writers call it Tanis, after the city of that name. It is now named Menzala: its waters are ſoft in the time of inundation, and become brackiſh as the river retreats within its channel. It was the ſame under the reign of the caliphs. "The

(*p*) Et ſeptemgemini turbant trepida oſtia Nili. *Virg.*
Perque papyriferi ſeptemfluа flumina Nili. *Ovid.*

(*q*) Strabo, lib. xvii.

"Nile

" Nile overflowing at the ſummer ſolſtice, the " canals which diſcharge themſelves into the " lake Tanis make the waters ſoft; and the " reflux of the ſea, during winter, renders " them ſalt. There are iſlands in the lake, " built over like towns, as Nabli, Touna, Sam- " naa, and Haſſan-Elma, which can only be " approached by boats (*r*)." A viſit to theſe iſles, which no modern traveller has examined, and where manuſcripts and antiquities might be found, ſeems an object of importance.

About twelve hundred boats, each annually paying ſix-and-thirty ſhillings to the receiver of the pacha, continually fiſh on the lake. Among the various ſpecies of fiſh it ſupplies, ſome are excellent, ſuch as the *queyage*, the *gemal*, the *ſourd*, the ſole, and the gilt-head. The quality of the waters gives their fleſh whiteneſs, and delicacy of flavour: they are ſold in Damietta, and the neighbouring towns; and in ſuch abundance, that a large ſole, or gilt-head, coſts but two-pence.

(*r*) Oua behira *Tanis* aza amed el Nil fi el ſeif azab maouha. Oua aza gezar fi elcheta ila aouan, el bahr ihaleb, fe maleh maouha. Oua fiha meden meſl elgezair tatheif elbehira, oua hie *Nabli*, oua *Touna*, oua *Samnaa*, oua *Haſſan el ma*; oua tarik ila ouahada menha ella belſafen. *Geograph. Nubienſ. ſect.* 3.

The

The Bourri, or mullet, is the moſt beneficial of all to the fiſhermen, who open the females, and take out the roe, of which they make boutargue (*s*), by ſalting, and vend it through all Egypt. The various outlets of the lake to the Nile and Mediterranean being full of iſlands, ruſhes, inſects, and herbs, the river and ſea-fiſh ſwarm and multiply here infinitely; ſupplying two thouſand fiſhermen, and clouds of birds, without apparent diminution. Nature has done ſo much for Egypt, that the fecundity of its earth and waters is inconceivable; wherefore has it ever been a nurſing-mother to neighbouring nations. The waters of the lake are covered with wild-geeſe, ducks, teal, divers, and the ibis. I have killed ſeveral of the latter in the marſhes near Roſetta; their claws and neck are long, and bodies ſmall; alternately black and white, and they feed on fiſh, frogs, and reptiles. Here alſo are many cormorants, the grey and the white heron, ſnipes, rice-hens, cranes, red-ſhanks, &c. The birds which moſt attract notice are the ſilver-ſwan, proudly ſwimming in the waters; the flamingo, with red and black wings, and the ſtately pelican; the

(*s*) They ſalt the roe, and dry it in the ſun; it is a food well known to the ſailors of Provence.

latter

latter ſurpaſſes the others in its majeſtic port, height, and ſhape; and, by its white plumage, rivals the ſwan in beauty. It is ſeen among the birds that crowd the lake, riſing above them all, with its tufted head, like their monarch. Nature has provided it with an exceedingly ſtrong beak to overpower large fiſh. The Arabs have found means to tame and teach it to give them the prey. The only pelican of this ſpecies I ſaw in France was in the Royal Menagerie, and, though long captivity, and a ſmall extent of water, where the bird could not diſplay itſelf, deprived it of much of its beauty, yet, its proud form and white plumage ſhowed it ſtill to be a moſt noble bird.

I have mentioned ſome of the principal ſpecies of birds that frequent the lake, but the variety of their colours, the diverſity of their cries, and their prodigious multitudes, I can give you no idea of. Far as the eye can reach, they cover its ſurface. Every minute innumerable flights deſcribe vaſt circuits in the air, and gently deſcend on its boſom; others flying the approach of the fiſhermen, riſe in clouds to ſeek the ſolitude they love; here a vaſt family, aſſembled in a flock, ſwim, and there others, riſing on the wing, bear their prey in their beak. The continual

tinual motion, the vaſt expanſe of waters gently ruffled by the wind, diſtant iſlands brightened by the ſun-beams, boats cutting the ſilver waves, banks ſhaded by groves, variegated by villages, and decked in eternal verdure, all preſent an ever changeable, but ever charming proſpect, which I have a hundred times enjoyed with unceaſing pleaſure.

I have the honour to be, &c.

LET-

LETTER XXV.

Expedition of Louis IX. to Egypt, from Joinville, and Arabian authors, his deſcent near the Giza of Damietta: victory: taking of Damietta: march of the army up the Nile to the canal of Manſoura: attempts to croſs it: danger of the paſſage: and the victory and defeat which followed. Death of the Comte d'Artois. Taking of Louis IX. and his whole army. Maſſacre of Touran Shah. The ranſom of the French King: his departure for Saint John d'Acre, with a portrait of that monarch.

To M. L. M.

Damietta.

I HERE ſend you, Sir, the expedition of St. Louis into Egypt, extracted from Joinville and Arabian authors, and verified on the ſpot.

Louis wintered in the iſle of Cyprus with moſt of his troops, the remainder was to join him at the general rendez-vous before Damietta. He ſailed on Whitſun-Monday from Limazo,

ac-

accompanied by eighteen hundred veſſels, great and ſmall, the moſt formidable ſquadron the Mediterranean had beheld ſince the Perſians. The ſea ſeemed covered with ſhips to a vaſt extent; and, during the paſſage, the prince of the Morea and the duke of Burgundy joined the royal fleet, which in four days anchored in the road of Damietta. Nejem Eddin, of the race of the Ayoubites, then governed Egypt and Syria. Learned in the trade of arms, by the wars he had ſuſtained againſt the Cruſaders, Chareſmians, and inhabitants of Damaſcus, and the victories he had gained over theſe enemies, which had confirmed his power, and eſtabliſhed his authority among the ſoldiers; equally politic and brave; as capable of wielding the ſceptre as the ſword; himſelf dictating orders to his miniſters for the interior government of his kingdom, and anſwering the petitions his ſubjects preſented, while he formed the plan of a campaign; ſuch, according to Abulfeda, was the king Louis had to combat. When the French monarch arrived at the iſle of Cyprus, he had quitted Syria; and, foreſeeing, the ſtorm, which menaced the Mahometans, would burſt over Damietta, had added new fortifications to that important place. Having ſupplied it with a

numerous garriſon, proviſions, and implements of war, proper to ſuſtain a long ſiege, he removed to Achmoun Tanis, to obſerve the enemy's motions. Though dangerouſly ill, he neglected nothing which might fruſtrate their deſigns. Facr Eddin was ſent with a conſiderable body of cavalry, to oppoſe the landing of the French; and, poſting himſelf near the Giza (*t*) of Damietta, and the weſtern ſhore of the Nile, and the ſea, he there might eaſily impede their debarkation.

The Egyptian army, properly drawn up, was ſeen by the fleet two hundred paces from the ſhore, with the mingled ſounds of drums and trumpets, colours flying, burniſhed arms reflecting the ſun-beams, and a face of war, which awed the bold, and terrified the timid. The king called his barons to conſult on what was moſt expedient, who adviſed him to wait the coming up of the reſt of his army before he ventured a deſcent in preſence of an enemy

(*t*) Giza, as I have ſaid, ſignifies angle, or end. This was the moſt diſtant ſuburb of Damietta, built on the other ſide the Nile. A mount of ſtones and rubbiſh ſtill marks its ſite, facing the ſmall village of Eſba. The bridge to Damietta began here: I have carefully obſerved theſe places in my various journeys hither, and marked them on the map.

ſo

ſo well intrenched. Louis rejected the puſillanimous advice, and obſerved that the road (*u*) of Damietta was ſo expoſed that, ſhould a ſtorm riſe, the fleet would either be diſperſed or driven on ſhore: he therefore gave orders to land on the morrow-morning, and commanded an attack on the Egyptians, ſhould they not refuſe to give battle.

On Friday, the 4th of June, 1249, the boats, with the French army, rowed towards the ſhore; as they landed, the enemy's cavalry fell upon them, but the ſoldiers, fixing their bucklers in the ſand, and preſenting their lances, formed a pointed wall. Their reſolute countenance cooled the Mahometan impetuoſity, and they only galloped about, and threw their javelins. When the king ſaw the royal ſtandard erected on ſhore, he jumped from his boat into the ſea, and, wading up to the arm-pits, marched ſword in hand to the enemy. The French, encouraged by his preſence, ran to the attack, and gained a bloody victory. Two Emirs were ſlain; which loſs, and a deſcent ſo bold, ſo ter-

(*u*) The Egyptians had ſo ſtopped up the Nile that the French fleet could not enter; and, the road of Damietta being very dangerous, the determination of Louis was equally prudent and brave.

rified Facr Eddin, that he paſſed the night on the bridge of Damietta, and haſtily fled. A panic fear at ſight of this ſeized the garriſon, who cowardly abandoned the bulwark of Egypt, and the inhabitants eſcaped in the dark. The French entered on the morrow without oppoſition. Thus a city, which, thirty years before, ſuſtained a ſiege of ſixteen months, was taken in one day. The French flag was diſplayed from the towers of Damietta on the Sunday, where abundant ſtores, and vaſt quantities of arms, were found. The victors, after giving heaven thanks for this fortunate conqueſt, deliberated whether they ſhould not directly march for Grand Cairo: this would have been their wiſeſt courſe; the Nile being low, they would have found fewer impediments; but Louis refuſed to depart before the arrival of the comte de Poitiers, his brother, who brought the arriere-ban of France.

The taking this important fortreſs ſpread conſternation through Grand Cairo, whoſe inhabitants imagined the enemy at their gates. The ſultan's illneſs increaſed their terrors; and ſo great was the alarm, that the timid fled toward Upper Egypt, while a few brave men, animated by the love of their country, joined the army

of

of Nejem Eddin, who, accuſtomed to the fortune of war, was not diſcouraged by this unforeſeen accident; though he cauſed fifty of the principal officers, who had ſo diſhonourably quitted their poſts, to be beheaded. Facr Eddin he durſt not puniſh thus, fearing to excite a rebellion in the army, where this general was beloved; but he ſternly reprimanded him, and, removing to Manſoura, he was active in putting it into a ſtate of defence, at which the whole army laboured. Fixing his camp between the canal of Achmoun and this town, he reſolved to wait for the enemy in a poſt ſo advantageous, and prevent their paſſing the river; meantime he ſent ſome ſquadrons of light horſe to haraſs the French in their camp.

The critical moment was loſt in waiting for the comte de Poitiers, by which the Egyptians profited, fortifying themſelves, and aſſembling their forces. Their panic over, they ſkirmiſhed round the French camp, which the Arabs entered in the dark, making ſome priſoners, and ſlaughtering thoſe they could not carry off. The lord de Courcenay was thus beheaded, after they had killed the centinel before his tent. The king then encompaſſed the camp by a deep

foſſé, and made the archers mount guard at night. The favourable ſeaſon for marching up the country was waſted, and the ſwelling of the Nile daily filled the canals which interſected the plain, and rendered the march of an army difficult, in face of an enemy who might impede them at every ſtep. The Legate, according to the cuſtom of the age, ordered proceſſions to haſten the arrival of the comte de Poitiers, three ſucceſſive Saturdays, from Damietta to the ſea. They were very pompous, the king and the lords walking in them. The prince at length arrived, at which the camp rejoiced. As ſoon as he had landed, Louis aſſembled his barons, to adviſe on their future proceedings; opinions were divided; the comte Peter of Britanny, and moſt of the lords, held it beſt to go, immediately, and beſiege Alexandria, one of the keys of Egypt. They obſerved, this city had an excellent harbour, where the fleet might winter in ſecurity, and the army, while conquering the country, might, by this means, receive the proviſions and ſuccour it ſhould need; adding that, the ſhips neither being able to enter the Nile nor remain in the road, the French would be in danger of periſhing

ing by famine, ſhould any misfortune befall them. Theſe were weighty reaſons; but the comte d'Artois thought differently, and ſaid, he who would kill the ſerpent ſhould cruſh his head; and therefore it was beſt to march immediately for the capital. Louis, rejecting the advice of his barons, followed that of his brother, forgetting the obſtacles he had to encounter, and departure was reſolved on.

Nejem Eddin died the 22d of November, of an abſceſs in the lungs, in the flower of his age. The ſultana Chegeret Eddour, whoſe genius was ſuperior to her ſex, inſtead of ſinking under the misfortune, employed herſelf in ſaving the ſtate. Sending for Facr Eddin, general of the army, and the eunuch, Dgemal Eddin, who poſſeſſed great authority, ſhe entreated them to aid her in the government, and keep the ſultan's death ſecret till the arrival of her ſon Touran Shah, who was in Diar Bekir, and to whom couriers were diſpatched. Buſineſs was tranſacted, and orders were ſent through Egypt, in the ſultan's name, as if he had ſtill been living; which policy kept the troops from deſpondency, and, by concealing the loſs of Nejem Eddin from the enemy, prevented them from profiting by ſo favourable a circumſtance. At the be-

ginning of advent, the French army (*x*) left the plains of Damietta, and on the 7th of December encamped at Fareſcour, where it remained to dam up a canal which ran from the river to the lake Menzala. This they eaſily accompliſhed, becauſe they raiſed their mound at its mouth. Facr Eddin ſent five hundred horſe, well mounted, to diſpute the paſſage of the river, who poſted themſelves on the oppoſite ſhore. Spite of their bold countenance, the Templars croſſed firſt; and, the king having forbid them to attack the enemy, formed their ranks. This caution emboldened the Arabs, who conſtrued it into fear, and, attacking the Templars furiously, ſlew one of thoſe brave warriors, beſide Renaut de Bichiers, their marſhal. Indignant at the ſight, and incapable of reſtraining his ardour, he exclaimed, "Upon them, in the name of "God; I can bear no more." The whole corps immediately was in motion, and fell on the

(*x*) Macrizi, who generally agrees with Joinville, fixes, like him, the departure of the French in the month of December, but attributes it to the news of the ſultan's death; whereas, it is certain, from Joinville, the French did not hear of it till they encamped near Manſoura, and that the arrival of the comte de Poitiers was the reaſon of this daring and dangerous march during the inundation. Thus hiſtorians, reciting facts, are often miſtaken in their cauſes.

Egyptians,

Egyptians, whoſe ranks, unable to ſuſtain the ſhock, were broken; part of them were ſlain, and the reſt driven into the river, where they periſhed. This ſucceſs unfortunately encouraged diſobedience, which occaſioned all the conſequent diſgrace of the French.

The army encamped, the ſame day, at Sherimſah, a village not far diſtant, without moleſtation from the enemy; its march was ſlow, becauſe arms of the river, or large rivulets, were continually to be dammed up. It next encamped at Baramoun, and did not appear at Manſoura till the 19th of December. Between the town and the French was the canal of Achmoun, which muſt be paſſed to attack the enemy, intrenched on the oppoſite ſide (*y*), and in order to gain poſſeſſion of this important place.

A fleet of large boats accompanied the army, which it plentifully ſupplied. They fought by land and water. The canal of Achmoun is as

(*y*) In the map accompanying the fine edition of Joinville printed at the Louvre, by order of the king, the canal of Achmoun is placed beyond Manſoura, contrary to truth and hiſtory. The French muſt have come from Upper Egypt to beſiege this town, if ſo; or they would not have met with this canal on their paſſage.

wide

wide as the Saone, and much deeper: its banks in general are ſteep, and it was impoſſible to paſs it by ſwimming in face of the whole force of Egypt. They, therefore, determined to throw up a mound; and baliſtæ, and other machines, proper to throw ſtones, were erected, as were two wooden towers, with covered galleries, to protect the workmen; but, inſtead of beginning at the mouth of the canal, as at Fareſcour, they went half a league below, which rendered their enterprize impoſſible; for, as they advanced, the Egyptians made deep cuts, which, ſuddenly bearing the waters againſt the mound, deſtroyed, in a moment, the work of ſeveral weeks. Ill ſucceſs did not deter the engineers, who obſtinately continued the plan they began with. While the work was purſued with zeal, Facr Eddin, ſecretly, landed troops at Sherimſah, who unexpectedly attacked the camp, and occaſioned ſome diſorder. Joinville, who, with the Templars, guarded the Damietta ſide, haſtily armed, and repelled the enemy. This induced Louis to cut a foſſé from the canal of Achmoun to the Nile, which gave ſecurity to the camp.

The fruitleſs labours of the mound were continued. The enemy, grown bold, a ſecond time attacked the camp, and, after an obſtinate fight, were

were repelled, with loſs, by the comte d'Anjou. They then fell on the part defended by the comte de Poitiers, but a vigorous reſiſtance again obliged them to retire. Notwithſtanding theſe repulſes, the Arab horſe continually ſkirted the army, and ſeized on all ſtragglers. The impracticable mound was not completed; the Egyptians ſhowered ſtones on the workmen, and gave ſtill greater annoyance by the Greek-fire, which they ſeveral times caſt, and burnt the towers and galleries, in defiance of the efforts of the French. Joinville, who was on guard one night at the mound, gives a terrifying deſcription of the Greek-fire. "The fire they caſt "was as large as a tun, with a long burning "tail; its noiſe in the air was like thunder, and "it ſeemed a flying dragon. The light it gave "was ſo great that I could ſee throughout the "camp as clearly as in open day." This artificial fire conſumed the body on which it fell, without a poſſibility of its being extinguiſhed; yet the burning the towers and galleries made them not abandon an ill-conceived project. Wood was collected, from the boats, to build new works, which underwent the like fate, in ſpite of the valour of the French. This laſt misfortune ſpread deſolation through the camp, and all

all hope of paſſing the canal was given up. While they deliberated on returning to Damietta, the conſtable, Hymbert de Beaujeu, came to tell the king a Bedaouin (z) had promiſed to diſcover a ford, if they would give him five hundred beſants of gold. Louis conſented; the ford was found; and the duke of Burgundy was left to guard the camp, while the king and his three brothers went to combat the Egyptians. On the 8th of February, 1250, the French cavalry, guided by the Bedaouin, aſſembled, by day-break, before the ford, two leagues diſtant from the Nile, and, entering the waters, which were deep (a), the horſes ſwam as far as the middle of the canal; but, finding footing, they ſoon reached the oppoſite bank; though ſeveral were drowned in this dangerous paſſage, among whom was John of Orleans. Some three hundred Arabs, who defended the paſs, were ſoon put to flight. The king commanded the Templars to lead the van, and the comte d'Artois,

(z) Bedaouin comes from Bedaoui, inhabitant of the deſert: the wandering Arabs are ſo called.

(a) Joinville and Macrizi both ſay the Nile was then at its higheſt, which is extraordinary, for that was the ſeaſon when the waters ſhould have been low. Arabian hiſtory, indeed, contains ſimilar examples, and the inundation has been known a month or two later than uſual.

with

with his corps, to ſuſtain them. But this prince, ſeeing the enemy fly, could not moderate his ardour, and purſued. The grand maſter of the Templars ſent to beg that he would wait, for that it was his right to march firſt, conjuring the prince not to diſhonour him by taking a poſt confided to his valour. Without daring to reply, the comte liſtened to the remonſtrance; but, unfortunately, Fourcaut du Merne, his brave ſquire, who led the bridle of his horſe, was deaf, and, not hearing what was ſaid to the prince, continued advancing, and calling aloud "Upon them!" Perceiving this, and thinking their honour at ſtake, if they did not hold their rank, the Templars ſpurred their horſes, and galloped toward the enemy. Terrified at this unforeſeen attack, the Egyptians fled on all ſides, abandoning their camp; while theſe brave, but imprudent cavaliers, vanquiſhing all who reſiſted, came to Manſoura, forced one of the gates, and entered the city. Facr Eddin, who was then at the bath, ſcarce had time to dreſs himſelf and mount a horſe, without ſaddle or bridle. Collecting ſome of his ſlaves to oppoſe the torrent, he and they were ſlain. So ſudden was the attack, and the rout ſo rapid, that the comte d'Artois and the Templars were in Manſoura before

before a part of the army had paſſed the ford. Had the troops been all united, and the victors ſuſtained, the defeat would have been general, and Manſoura, and, perhaps, all Egypt, conquered. But there was a ſpace of two leagues between the van and the rear of the French army. Bibars Elbondouk Dari, chief of the Baharites (*b*), ſaw the error, and profited by it like an able general, rallying the fugitives, aſſembling the flower of the Egyptian cavalry, and

(*b*) Nejem Eddin had beſieged Napoli, a town in Syria, where, his troops flying, the Baharite ſlaves ſuſtained the ſhock of the enemy, and gave the prince time to eſcape. This ſervice gained his confidence; and, ſucceeding to the throne of Egypt, ſoon after, inſtead of his brother, Melec Eladal Seif Eddin, he beſtowed many favours on them, and raiſed them to the firſt employments. Quitting the caſtle of Salah Eddin, the former reſidence of the ſultans, to inhabit that he had built in the iſle of Raouda, oppoſite Old Cairo, he appointed his favourite ſlaves to guard it; and, as the Arabs call great rivers Bahar, or ſea, they took the name of Baharites, or maritime. Having aſſaſſinated Touran Shah, the laſt of the family of the Ayoubites, they reigned over Egypt and Syria a hundred and thirty-ſix years, and had twenty-ſeven kings. They were Turks, originally, bought of Syrian merchants, by Nejem Eddin, and were dethroned, in their turn, by the Mamluks, or Circaſſian ſlaves, in the year 784 of the Hegira, who formed a new dnayſty, which continued till the conqueſt of Egypt by Selim, in the year 923 of the Hegira.

throw-

throwing himſelf between the city and the main body of the French, to prevent all communication. While he fought divided troops, and ſtopped the paſſage of Louis, the comte de Poitiers, and the comte d'Anjou, the Egyptians, animated by this example, took courage, and attacked the too haſty cavaliers, who were combating in the narrow ſtreets of Manſoura. They were excellently ſeconded by the inhabitants, who ſhowered ſtones on them from the tops of their houſes. The French ſunk under the general aſſault; two thirds of the Templars, and near three hundred knights, periſhed; the comte d'Artois, after performing wonders, fell, covered with wounds, amidſt a heap of dead, an unhappy victim to his own diſobedience of orders: with him fell moſt of his officers. Joinville, and ſeveral brave knights, took refuge in an old houſe, valorouſly defending themſelves againſt hoſts of enemies, but with little hope of eſcaping death, moſt of them being dangerouſly wounded. In this extreme peril, Erart de Severey, who had been cut in the face with a ſabre, and bled exceſſively, ſaid, "Knights, if you "will ſhield the memory of me and my de- "ſcendants from all blame, I will go and de- "mand aid from the comte d'Anjou, whom I "per-

"perceive yonder in the plain." All applauding his reſolution, he mounted his horſe, galloped through ſquadrons of the enemy, and came to the prince; who, hearing the news he brought, went to the relief of Joinville and the reſt. Thus were they indebted for life to this gentleman; who, almoſt dying, dreaded a diſhonourable grave for having abandoned his companions, though it was only to bring them ſuccour.

The corps which the king commanded advanced on the plain, and ſuſtained every attack of the Turkiſh and Arab cavalry. Mounted on a noble horſe he appeared a hero amidſt his ſquadrons; his helmet was gilt with gold, his ſword was German, and his arms highly burniſhed; his fortitude, for the carnage was great, inſpired valour. The armies were ſo cloſely engaged they could only uſe the mace, the battle-ax, and ſabre. While he found employment for the beſt of the enemy's horſe, John de Valeri adviſed him to turn to the right, toward the river, that he might be ſuſtained by the duke of Burgundy, and not ſurrounded; which counſel his generals approved. The officer who bore the royal ſtandard received orders accordingly; this movement expoſed the advanced troops, and

ſcarcely

ſcarcely had they retreated a ſtep before the comte de Poitiers, and the duke of Flanders, ſent to tell the king they were loſt, if he did not face about and give them time to join him. He halted, and, juſt then, Hymbert de Beaujeu came to inform him the comte d'Artois, encompaſſed by enemies, ſtill defended himſelf in a houſe of Manſoura, but that his death was certain, if not directly relieved. "Tell him," ſaid the monarch, "I follow you;" and, inſtantly, the conſtable, Joinville, and ſome cavaliers, left the main body, and haſtened toward the city. Scarcely had they proceeded a quarter of a league before a large corps of the enemy, coming between them and the king, prevented him from advancing; and Joinville, ſeeing it impoſſible to join the main body, or gain Manſoura, where the Turks were victorious, propoſed to the conſtable to poſt themſelves on a bridge over a large rivulet, and prevent the enemy from attacking the French in the rear. The offer was accepted, and ſix cavaliers undertook to keep the paſs. Meantime, the different corps of the Chriſtian army, divided and ſurrounded by the Mahometans, were vigorouſly driven back, toward the canal; a great number of cavaliers, thinking all was loſt, haſtily threw themſelves

in; but their fatigued horſes could not gain the oppoſite ſhore, and, in a moment, the waters were covered with arms and drowning men. The king ſaw his life in danger; abandoned by his troops, ſix Turks, ſeizing his horſe's bridle, were leading him priſoner; but, with unſhaken fortitude, collecting all his ſtrength, and uſing his excellent arms with agility and addreſs, he alone vanquiſhed his ſix enemies. This heroic action ſtopped the fugitives; aſhamed to forſake a king who ſo bravely defended himſelf, his knights crowded round him, and, as if the prodigy they had beheld had given them new powers, furiouſly renewed the combat, and repelled the victors.

Joinville and Hymbert, who ſtill kept their poſt, ſaw the comte Peter of Britanny coming from Manſoura, his face covered with blood, heading a ſquadron in which both officers and ſoldiers were moſt of them dangerouſly wounded, and purſued full ſpeed by the Turks. The conſtable and his ſmall troop flew to their ſupport, and robbed the enemy of their prize. Joinville invited the comte de Soiſſons, his kinſman, to ſtay and guard the bridge with him, and prevent the Mahometans from taking the French in the rear. This brave knight accepted the offer;

fer; and Hymbert, ſeeing them determined to guard this important poſt, went for a reinforcement. Peter de Neville, ſurnamed Gayet, joined them; and theſe three knights, their lances in the reſt, and covering themſelves with their ſhields, defended the paſs againſt every attack. Two of the valiant guards of the king, named William de Boon and John de Gomaches, kept before them, nor could the Turks make them retreat a ſtep. The arms of theſe generous warriors were ſtuck with darts. Peter de Neville received a blow on the head from a mace; Joinville was wounded by five javelins, and his horſe by fifteen. While thus expoſed to a thouſand perils, the comte de Soiſſons, incapable of fear, pleaſantly ſaid to Joinville, "The hallooing of "this mob, Seneſchal, is fine ſport; by God's "quoif (it was his uſual oath) we'll talk of this "day in our ladies' chambers." Gallantry we find always accompanied French valour.

The conſtable kept his word with the heroes of the bridge; brought them ſuccour toward the evening, and drove off the enemy. They then joined the king, who, as well as his ſoldiers, had fought all day, without eating. Night coming on, both armies retired, The ſieur de Chatillon commanded the rear guard; and part

of the French army, maſters of the Egyptian camp and their war-machines, there paſſed the night. The other part, under the duke of Burgundy, was encamped north of the canal. The comte d'Artois and many a lord loſt their lives on this day, which had ſeen the taking of Manſoura, and the total defeat of the Egyptians, had the attack by the French been general, as the Arab writers themſelves confeſs (*c*). But, unfortunately, the king's orders having been diſreſpected, the French were divided, and the addreſs of Bibars prevented them from re-uniting. While guarding the bridge, Joinville ſays he ſaw many a pretty gentleman flying, full ſpeed, whom no calling could ſtop: but that Guion de Malvoiſin, with a company of knights, his kinſmen, and the comte Peter of Britanny, returned glorioufly, and honourably, from Manſoura, where they had ſignalized their courage.

On the morning of that memorable day, they had flown a pigeon (*d*), from Manſoura, to carry

(*c*) Macrizi, who has well deſcribed the expedition of Louis, owns Manſoura were loſt, and the Mahomentans totally defeated, had the French attacked in a body, and not by diviſions.

(*d*) This cuſtom, which long ſubſiſted in the Eaſt, is now loſt; though, not long ſince, the merchants of Syria uſed thus

ry the news to Grand Cairo, of the death of Facr Eddin and the flight of the Egyptians. The letter ſpread conſternation, which the fugitives augmented: the gates of the city were open all night for their reception; but, on the morrow, another pigeon informed them of the ſucceſs of Bibars and the Baharites. Gladneſs ſucceeded ſorrow, the citizens congratulated each other in the ſtreets, and public rejoicings were made.

The enemy were armed by ſun-riſing, and made an irruption into the camp to regain their machines from the French. The attack was on the ſide guarded by Joinville, who, hearing the cry "to arms," roſe; but he and his ſoldiers were ſo ſtiff with their wounds they could neither wear helmet nor cuiraſs. They marched, however, to the enemy, who, having forced the vanguard, were near ſeizing their baliſtæ. The king ſent a reinforcement, under De Chatillon; and the Egyptians were driven beyond the paliſades. Eight Turks, at ſome diſtance, well arm-

thus to inform their correſpondents of the arrival of ſhips at the port of Alexandria, whence letting a pigeon fly, the news reached Aleppo in five or ſix hours. The caliphs had eſtabliſhed this rapid mode of intelligence from Cairo to Bagdad.

ed, entrenched behind a mound of ſtones, and ſuſtained by a body of cavalry, ſhot their random arrows into the camp, and wounded many of the ſoldiers. Joinville was reſolved to attack them, during the night, and deſtroy their entrenchment; but John de Vaſſey, one of his prieſts, had leſs patience; he put on an iron helmet, and a cuiraſs,, and, taking a large ſcymitar under his arm, walked toward them. They paid little attention at the ſight of a ſingle man, and he inſenſibly approached: when near enough, he drew his ſcymitar, ran upon them, and, with his two-handed ſtrokes, put all the eight to flight; which valorous action rendered him famous throughout the army.

Touran Shah arrived, and the ſultana, whoſe fruitful genius had found reſources, and held the reins of government in times ſo difficult, remitted them to the new ſultan, who came to Manſoura, appeared at the head of his troops, and ſhowed them the coat of mail of the comte d'Artois, affirming it was that of the king. "Brave muſſulmen," added he, "the enemy "have loſt their chief: redouble your efforts, they "cannot withſtand your valour: let us make a "general aſſault to-morrow, force their camp, "and exterminate theſe French from the earth."

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The ſoldiers loudly applauded, and prepared to do their duty. Louis, informed by his ſpies of the meditated attack, commanded each chief, at day-break, to diſpoſe his battalions, in good order, behind the paliſade of ſtakes they had fixed to prevent the enemy's cavalry from penetrating the camp; which orders were obeyed. At ſun-riſing, the ſultan was ſeen, on a ſtately ſteed, ranging his troops from the canal of Achmoun to the river, the cavalry in the van, the infantry in the rear, and ſtrengthening his lines in proportion to the enemies he had to face. His troops thus prepared, he diſplayed his colours, about noon, and ſounded the charge (a fearful and confuſed noiſe of drums and trumpets), and the Egyptian army aſſailed the French on all ſides. The comte d'Anjou, at the front of the camp next Manſoura, was the firſt attacked. The foot advanced, and, having thrown their greek-fire, the horſe ſucceeded, and, forcing a way with their ſabres, entered the entrenchments. Moſt of the French cavalry were diſmounted at the battle of Manſoura, and the prince fought on foot with his ſoldiers. The number of the enemy, their ſuperiority as cavalry, and the dreadful artificial fire they employed, threw his battalion into diſorder, and,

ſpite of his valour, he was in danger of being taken or killed. This news being brought to the king, he flew to reſcue his brother with what cavaliers he had, and penetrated ſo far into the crowd, that his horſe's bridle was covered with the greek-fire, and himſelf in danger of being burnt. The Egyptians, however, could not ſtand the ſhock of the king and his generous knights, but retreated in diſorder.

Next the comte d'Anjou were the cruſaders, commanded by Guy d'Ibelin and Baldwin his brother, near whom was Walter de Chatillon, at the head of his ſquadron. Theſe two corps, full of brave knights, and excellent cavalry, repelled every aſſault, and remained firm, not receding a ſtep.

William de Sonnac, grand maſter of the Templars, having before loſt moſt of his knights, fortified that part of the camp he guarded with a double paliſade, to which the Egyptians ſet fire, and, ruſhing through the flames, aſſailed him with fury. The valorous Templars, though covered with darts and arrows, formed an impenetrable rampart; and their grand maſter, who had loſt an eye at Manſoura, received a wound in the other, of which he died. Joinville aſſerts that behind the ground

ground they occupied, was a large ſpace ſo covered with javelins, as to hide the ſurface.

Guion de Malvoiſin, who commanded a battalion near the Templars, defended himſelf ſo well that the enemy could gain no advantage; but the brave chief was near being conſumed by the greek-fire.

Comte William of Flanders and his forces extended along the river; he boldly received the Egyptians, repelled them furiouſly, put all to flight who oppoſed him, and killed a great number. Walter de la Horgne here ſignalized his courage by high deeds of arms. The comte de Poitiers was next in order; but, having only infantry, his troops were broken, the camp penetrated, and the prince ſeized. The women and butchers, ſeeing him led priſoner, began to ſhout, armed themſelves with hatchets, fell upon the victors, drove them from the entrenchments, and recovered the king's brother.

Jocerant de Brancion, one of the moſt valiant knights in the French army, defended that part of the camp next the canal: his ſoldiers were all on foot, he alone on horſeback. The Arabs, ſeveral times, broke his ranks; but the brave Brancion, with ſabre in hand, continually rallied his men, and repulſed them. He

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and his ſoldiers, however, muſt have fallen, had not Henry de Brienne, from the duke of Burgundy's camp, annoyed the enemy with his croſs-bow men, over the canal, every time they renewed the attack. De Brancion had been in ſix-and-thirty combats and battles, where he had always borne away the prize, and on this day, not the moſt inglorious of his life, received a great number of wounds, of which he died.

Night ſeparated the combatants, and, on the morrow, the king aſſembled his barons to conſole them for their loſſes, and excite conſtancy. "Gentlemen," ſaid he, "let us return heaven "thanks, and take courage: we have paſſed "the canal, driven the enemy from their camp, "and, without cavalry, oppoſed the whole "power of the ſultan." Diſcouraged by reſiſtance ſo obſtinate, Touran Shah, in fact, deſpaired of forcing the French camp, and determined to ſtarve them. Their army was abundantly ſupplied by the proviſions collected at Damietta, which were brought to them by the ſmall fleet they had on the river; and the ſultan properly judged, that, could he cut off the communication between the camp and Damietta, he might conquer thoſe by famine whom he could not by force. Every means accordingly were employ-

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ed; a great number of boats was aſſembled, unrigged, tranſported on the backs of camels near the canal of Mehalla (*e*), and concealed in a proper place for an ambuſcade. The French fleet unſuſpectingly was, as uſual, bringing proviſions, when, approaching the iſle where the ſultan's galleys were hidden, the Egyptians ſuddenly appeared, ſurpriſed their enemies, attacked them furiouſly, ſurrounded them, killed about a thouſand ſoldiers, and took fifty large loaded boats. The Egyptians thus become maſters of the river, there was no longer any communication between the camp and Damietta; and ſcarcity ſoon ſucceeded, with diſeaſe, its dreadful attendant. The wounded, wanting nutriment, periſhed; and the dead bodies, floating on the river and the canal, corrupted the air; a de-

(*e*) We learn from Abulfeda there were ſeveral towns and villages in Egypt called Mehalla; the place here meant is three leagues below Manſoura, where there is a ſmall canal, the mouth of which is hidden by an iſle, which ſeems a proper place for an ambuſcade. In the edition of Joinville printed at the Louvre, a note is cited, in which Macrizi mentions Mehalla; and they have erroneouſly ſuppoſed he meant Mehalla Kebira, capital of one of the provinces of the Delta, and ſix leagues above Manſoura. The French muſt have had their proviſions from Upper Egypt, could a fleet at this place have intercepted their convoy.

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ſtructive epidemic malady ravaged the army, and few of thoſe who were attacked eſcaped death. Their fleſh dried on their bones, their livid ſkin was ſpotted black, and their gums were ſo prodigiouſly ſwelled they could take no food till the excreſcent fleſh was cut away. All who underwent this operation ſhrieked moſt lamentably. Such was the condition of an army lately ſo flouriſhing. The Arabian authors agree with Joinville in giving a terrifying deſcription of the deplorable ſtate of the French, encompaſſed by enemies, and preyed on by all the horrors of famine and diſeaſe.

The remaining veſſels from Damietta, on the 7th of March 1250, made a new attempt to bring ſupplies to the army, but were all taken, except one, belonging to the comte of Flanders, which ſo valiantly defended itſelf that it forced its way to the camp, where it brought the news of the defeat of the two fleets, and the impoſſibility of receiving ſuccour from Damietta while the galleys of the enemy ſwarmed on the river. This added to the conſternation and afflictions of the French; and Louis, after adviſing with his barons, reſolved to retreat over a wooden bridge they had thrown acroſs the canal, and join the duke of Burgundy. That the enemy might not

not profit by this motion, a wall was thrown up, ſome diſtance from the bridge, behind which the troops filed off. The baggage went firſt, then the king and his corps; De Chatillon commanded the rear guard, and the whole Egyptian army fell upon him; but their impetuoſity was repelled by the firmneſs with which they were received: enemy however ſucceeded enemy; and a part of the army, preſſed between the wall and the canal, and aſſaulted with the greek-fire and javelins, was in the utmoſt peril. The valour of the comte d'Anjou ſaved them, and repulſed the Egyptians. Geoffrey de Muſſembourg, who fought by his ſide, diſtinguiſhed himſelf by heroic deeds, and merited the palm of that day.

The French, encamped behind the canal of Achmoun, were in ſafety from the ſword, but not from contagion and famine, to which Louis, as well as his ſoldiers, was ſubjected. The camp daily became a vaſt cemetery, where death ſelected his victims. A truce now only could ſave the remains of the army, and this was propoſed to the ſultan: miniſters were mutually appointed, and the French king offered to reſtore Damietta (*f*), on condition that the knights of Jeru-

(*f*) The Cruſaders attacked Damietta in the year 1218, and

Jeruſalem ſhould be reinſtated in the places they loſt in Syria. The parties not agreeing, the conferences were broken off, and the French had but one reſource, which was to gain Damietta. It was determined to fly, on Tueſday night, the 5th of April; and the king commanded his brothers and the engineers to cut the cables which held the bridge over the canal of Achmoun. When it was dark, the troops began to file off toward Damietta, and thoſe

and took it, after a ſiege of ſixteen months. Sultan Melek Elmakel retreated two days' march from the city, and encamped at the angle formed by the canal of Achmoun and the Nile, where Manſoura was built. The Cruſaders followed, and encamped on the oppoſite bank, facing the Egyptians, who intercepted the communication between the European army and Damietta; and the latter offered to reſtore the city, on condition Jeruſalem, Aſcalon, and Tiberias, were ceded to them; which propoſal was rejected. The ſultan made a cut from the Nile, then at its greateſt height, and inundated the enemies' camp, ſo that they were up to the middle in water, and, had it not been for a cauſeway, muſt have been all drowned. Melek then threw bridges over the canal of Achmoun, and ſent troops, who ſeized the mound; and the Cruſaders, burning their tents and war-machines, would have returned to Damietta, but found it impoſſible. They then offered to reſtore the city, and peace was concluded, on that condition, in 1221.—Thus far Macrizi in his Hiſtory of the Arab Dynaſties. Louis, encamped in the ſame place, offered the ſame conditions, but was not equally fortunate.

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whom diſeaſe prevented from walking or riding deſcended the river in boats, among whom was Joinville. Louis, though weakened by a dyſentery, would neither forſake his troops nor be the firſt in flight; on the contrary, he kept with the rear guard, commanded by De Chatillon; Geoffry de Sergines, of all his officers, was the only one who refuſed to abandon him in this dangerous poſt. At day-break, the Egyptians, perceiving the army had decamped, hotly purſued. Notwithſtanding the poſitive orders of the king, the bridge had not been deſtroyed, but they paſſed it; and the cavalry, full gallop, came up with the French at Fareſcour. The rear guard was firſt attacked, where Geoffry de Sergines moſt intrepidly defended his king, admirably wielding his mace and ſword, and repelling his aſſailants. He led him into a houſe in the village, where fatigue and diſeaſe made him faint in the arms of a tradeſwoman of Paris; recovering, he had the conſolation to learn that ſome five hundred knights, aſſembled round his perſon, defended him valiantly againſt the ſultan's forces, fighting deſperately at the entrance of the village, where the French, inſpired by the hope of ſaving a king they adored, did wonders, and

diſputed

diſputed for victory (*g*). Amidſt the conflict, a traitor, named Marcel, called, with a loud voice, "Knights, the king commands you to "yield; let him not periſh by your obſtinacy." Hearing this, they laid down their arms; and the king, his brothers, and the whole army, were taken priſoners. Walter de Chatillon had alone defended a ſtreet againſt a hoſt of foes; completely armed, and well mounted, with a moſt tremendous ſword, as the Egyptians appeared, he flew to the rencounter, crying, "Cha-"tillon! knight! Where are my brave men?" and vanquiſhing thoſe that faced him, turned about to attack the aſſailants in the rear. After killing a great number of enemies, planted with arrows, exhauſted by fatigue, he fell, and they cut off his head. The king and the priſoners were conducted to Manſoura: nor had thoſe in the boats a better fate; they fell into the enemy's hands, who forced ſome of them into the river. Joinville eſcaped death by a kind of mi-

(*g*) The Arab authors agree with Joinville, the king, by flying firſt, might have eſcaped to Damietta; but, though this would have been moſt prudent, the generous prince refuſed to leave ſo many brave men expoſed to the enemy, and his courage made choice of the moſt dangerous poſt.

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racle. Being ſo feeble he could ſcarcely ſtand upright, they were going to behead him, had not a generous Arab, pitying his fate, taken him in his arms, and exclaimed, with all his force, " He is the king's couſin." This ſaved his life, and he, with many more lords, were taken to Manſoura. Ralph de Wanon, who was in the ſame boat, had been hamſtrung in a former battle, and could not ſtand: an old Arab had compaſſion on him, and aſſiſted him in all the wants of nature.

Touran Shah ſent fifty robes to the king and his lords, who put them on, except Louis, who refuſed, haughtily, ſaying he was ſovereign of a kingdom as great as Egypt, and it was derogatory for him to appear clothed in the robes of another monarch. The ſultan invited him to a banquet he had prepared, but, equally inflexible, he let them underſtand he perceived the ſultan's aim in this politeneſs, and the deſire he had to exhibit him to his army.

Ten thouſand French were in chains. Their number embarraſſed Touran Shah, and the barbarian, nightly, had four or five hundred taken from priſon, all of whom were beheaded, who refuſed to embrace Mahometaniſm, by Seif Ed-

din, the cruel miniſter of his vengeance. Peter of Britanny was appointed to treat of the releaſe of Louis and the priſoners. The Egyptians required them to reſtore Damietta, and the places they held in Syria; the latter article was rejected. The Mahometans broke off the treaty, and, endeavouring to effect their purpoſe by fear, ſent armed men where the king and his brothers were guarded, who, flouriſhing their ſabres, threatened to ſtrike off their heads. Finding theſe menaces ineffectual, and that nothing could induce a king whoſe ſoul was ſuperior to adverſity to commit an act of injuſtice, the negotiation was renewed. The Egyptians demanded 100,000 beſants (about 20,000l.) and to have Damietta reſtored, for the deliverance of the king and priſoners; to which Louis conſented, provided his queen ſhould approve the treaty. The Mahometans appearing ſurpriſed at this clauſe, he added, "the queen is my miſtreſs, "without whoſe conſent I will do nothing." Touran Shah, aſtoniſhed the king ſo readily ſhould grant a ſum ſo conſiderable, wiſhing to ſeem generous, declared he would remit a fifth part of the ranſom, and the parties agreed; and, their oaths mutually exchanged, the ſultan commanded

manded them to put the king and priſoners on board four great veſſels, and take them to Damiętta.

While the articles were preparing, Joinville and ſeveral lords, impriſoned in a diſtant tent, ſaw a company of youths armed with ſcymetars, headed by an old man, enter; whom, knowing the nightly executions, they ſuppoſed the miniſters of death. The old man aſked them, in a grave voice, whether they believed God had died and riſen again for them. They anſwered in the affirmative. "Then be not diſcou-"raged," replied this grave perſonage: "re-"member your ſufferings for him equal not what "he ſuffered for you: and if he had the power "to riſe from the dead, he will deliver you when "he ſhall think fit." So ſaying he retired, impreſſing their minds with aſtoniſhment, and reviving hope in their hearts. Soon after they learnt the treaty was concluded which reſtored them to freedom.

Touran Shah had brought with him, from Diar Bekir, ſome half a hundred courtiers, who had gained his confidence; and the beginning of his reign was ſignaliſed by the degradation of his father's ſervants, and the riſe of his favourites. The former had ſucceſſively arrived at

their offices and dignities by real ſervices, and were ſuddenly ſtripped, that theſe new intruders might occupy the moſt important poſts. The grandees and officers of the army were diſguſted at this injuſtice; but the bad policy of the ſultan did not ſtop here; he was indebted for the victory at Manſoura, and the defeat of the French, to the valour of the Baharites. Far from rewarding, and thus gaining the affection of a corps Nejam Eddin had formed, formidable for its valour and power. he took their employments from them, and gave them to underſtand they ſhould be diſbanded. Such imprudence did but excite their indignation: hate brooded in the heart, and vengeance only waited for a pretext, which the ſultan ſoon gave them. During the negotiations, he had retired to Fareſcour, the theatre of his victory, where a wooden tower was erected on the bank of the river, together with magnificent tents; and here he encamped, waiting the reſtoration of Damietta. Intoxicated by ſucceſs and flattery, he indulged in debauchery, and every kind of voluptuouſneſs. Gold glides like water from the hands of ſuch a king: his expenſes became exceſſive, and, to ſupply his pleaſures, he demanded reſtitution of his father's treaſures of the ſultana Chegeret Eddour,

Eddour, with threats, if not immediately ſatisfied. This ambitious woman ſaw the fall of herſelf or the tyrant inevitable, went to the chief of the Baharites, enumerated the ſervices ſhe had rendered the ſtate in its day of diſtreſs, the eſteem in which ſhe held that corps, and the ingratitude of Touran Shah, ending by imploring their protection againſt a king who had vowed implacable hatred to the friends of Nejam Eddin. This was ſufficient to rouſe the vengeance of the Baharites, to which they were but too much inclined. She was promiſed redreſs, and the death of the ſultan ſworn. The very ſame day, Bibars, having ſeduced his attendants, entered his tent, while he was at table, made a ſtroke at him with a ſabre, which would have cloven his ſkull had he not parried it with his hand; his fingers were cut off, and he haſtily fled, purſued by the aſſaſſins, into the tower on the bank of the Nile, and ſhut the door. The French, then proceeding to Damietta, having ſtopped at this place, were witneſſes of a moſt ſhocking ſcene. The murderers, finding they could not gain admiſſion, ſet fire to the tower. In vain did Touran Shah cry he would abdicate the throne, and only require to return to Diar Bekir; they were deaf to his interceſſions and

groans; ſurrounded by the flames, he leaped from the top of the tower, but a nail catching his mantle, he remained ſuſpended; the barbarians fell upon him, hacked him with their ſabres, and caſt him into the river, near the boat in which Joinville was. This horrid tranſaction paſſed in ſight of the Egyptian army, who made not a ſingle effort to ſave their king, ſo highly were they irritated by his imprudence. Thus miſerably periſhed the laſt ſultan of the family of the Ayoubites, eſtabliſhed in Egypt by Salah Eddin.

After the maſſacre the ſultana was declared queen; the firſt ſlave who reigned over Egypt during the reign of the Arabs. Some ſay ſhe was a Turk, others an Armenian; ſhe had been bought by Nejam Eddin, whom ſhe ſo captivated, that he never ſuffered her to be from him, but took her to his wars. Money was coined in her name, and Emir Azed Eddin Aibah, the Turcoman, was named generaliſſimo (*i*).

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(*i*) The ſultana eſpouſed him after ſhe had reigned three months, and diveſted herſelf of ſovereign power in his favour. He was the firſt ſultan of the dynaſty of Baharites. After reigning ſeven years, ſhe, perceiving he was tired of enjoying the title of king, only, while ſhe had the authority, and that he was inclined to other amours, had him aſſaſſinated,

The aſſaſſins entered the ſhips that contained the French priſoners, and he who had ended Touran Shah, with his hand ſtill reeking with blood, ſaid to Louis, "What wilt thou give me "for having rid thee of thy enemy?" The king made no reply. Several of theſe wretches leapt ſabre in hand on board the galley where Joinville was and many lords, and, flouriſhing their weapons, threatened to ſtrike off their heads. The tragedy they had beheld had terrified theſe brave knights, and, not leſs pious than valiant, thinking all was over, fell on their knees before a Trinitarian friar, and, all together, began to confeſs their ſins. The crowd being great, and the prieſt unable to hear them

ed, though, to pleaſe her, he had divorced a wife whom he loved. Nour Eddin, the ſon of this unhappy wife, conceived a violent hatred againſt the ſultana, bribed her women to murder her, and her corpſe, thrown naked into a ditch, remained three days unburied, but at laſt was entombed in the ſepulchre ſhe had prepared. Nour Eddin, the ſecond Baharite ſultan, was aſſaſſinated in two years' time, and ſucceeded by Bibars, who reigned, glorioufly, ſeventeen years. The laſt of the Baharites who reigned in Egypt, Iſhref Hadge, voluntarily abdicated royalty. Barkouk, ſucceeding him, began the dynaſty of the Mamluks, or Circaſſian ſlaves, who, under two-and-twenty kings, governed Egypt 121 years. Thoman Bey was the laſt, whom Selim cauſed to be hung under one of the gates of Cairo.

all at once, Guy d'Ybelin, conſtable of Cyprus, confeſſed to Joinville, who replied with admirable naïveté, "According to the power God has "given me, I give thee abſolution." Bayard, thus, the knight without fear or reproach, mortally wounded, confeſſed himſelf under an oak to his ſquire. Theſe lords, however, were only thrown pell-mell into the hold, where, diſeaſed as they were, they paſſed a miſerable night, in expectation of an end more miſerable; for they firmly believed they were only to be releaſed from their dungeon to be put to death. Abou Ali being named to treat with the king of France, after many debates they renewed their former agreement, and it was ſtipulated that, before leaving the Nile, Louis ſhould pay eight hundred pounds towards the ranſom, evacuate Damietta, and diſcharge the remaining ſum in the city of St. John d'Acre. Oaths were mutually exchanged, and the French lords taken from their captivity, and once more allowed to hope their misfortunes would have an end.

The diſgrace of the king and army reached the queen, and overwhelmed her with affliction. She was pregnant, and the news was brought three days before delivery. Her terrified fancy pictured the enemy at the gates of Damietta, where

where ſhe had been left. She ſaw them enter the city with fire and ſword, and her agitations became ſo violent that it was thought ſhe would have expired. A knight, eighty years of age, who devoted himſelf to her ſervice, left her neither day nor night. The wretched queen ſtarted in her ſleep, imagining the barbarians were forcing her apartment; and the old knight, who held her hand while ſhe ſlept, claſping it, then ſaid, "Fear nothing, madam, you are ſafe." She had not ſlept a moment, again, before ſhe awoke, ſhrieking, and he again endeavoured to appeaſe her fears. That ſhe might rid herſelf of theſe dreadful ideas, the queen commanded all to leave her chamber, except her guardian; then, falling on her knees to him, ſhe ſaid, "Pro-"miſe me, knight, to grant the favour I ſhall "requeſt." He promiſed, and ſhe continued, "I conjure you, by the faith you have ſworn, "ſhould the Saracens take the city, you will "cut off my head before I fall into their hands." "Madam," replied the knight, "this, be cer-"tain, I ſhall willingly perform; I had indeed "thought on the ſubject, and was reſolved "rather to take your life than ſuffer them to "ſeize your perſon." This promiſe gave tranquillity to the queen, and the day after this affecting

fecting ſcene ſhe was delivered of a ſon, named John Triſtan (the ſorrowful), alluding to the unhappy times in which he was born. The ſame day they informed her the Genoeſe, the Piſans, who were in the pay of France, and the townſmen, intended to fly from Damietta. She ſent for the principal of them to her bed-ſide, and, weeping, ſaid, "For the love of God, "gentlemen, do not abandon the city; it will "be the deſtruction of the king and the whole "army; have pity on the infant you ſee lying "beſide me." They replied, they muſt die of hunger; and ſhe, immediately, ordered all the proviſions in the city to be purchaſed and ſent them, ſaying they ſhould be maintained at the king's expenſe. Thus ſhe ſaved Damietta, the laſt reſource of the French.

The ſhips in which Louis and the other priſoners were, being come near the bridge of Damietta, the king ſent for the queen and princeſſes on board. On the appointed day, all the French quitted the city, and embarked in various ſhips, and the Egyptians with them, who, being drunk, inhumanly killed the ſick whom their treaty obliged them to take care of till they came to St. John d'Acre. This by no means beſpoke upright intentions, on their part, and, in fact, a violent

violent diſpute had ariſen among themſelves; the one part inſiſting on murdering the king and all the priſoners, and the other on keeping their ſtipulations; adding, that, ſhould the Egyptians thus violate their oaths, they would be held the moſt infamous people on earth. The conteſt increaſed, and they were a whole day in doubt. Meantime the veſſels in which the unhappy captives were had been ſent a league above Damietta, nor were they left ignorant that they were intended to be maſſacred. At laſt, Aibah, the Turcoman, hoping to divide the remainder of the ranſom which was to be paid at St. John d'Acre with the Babarites (*k*), drew his ſabre, and ſwore he never would ſuffer the faith of treaties thus to be violated. This terminated the difference, and they agreed to reſtore the French to freedom. While the Egyptians meditated this abominable act, the king was in high wrath againſt a lord, who told him, that, in paying the promiſed ſum, they had been wronged of four hundred pounds, which the king ordered to be reſtored them, although they

(*k*) According to the Arab hiſtorians, the fear, only, of loſing the ranſom preſerved the king and all the priſoners the barbarians, who ſo lately had drenched their hands in the blood of their ſultan, would not have ſpared one of their enemies, had not their intereſt oppoſed their cruelty.

had

had already failed in a part of their engagements. At length, every thing being ſettled, the king, his brothers, and queen, embarked for St. John d'Acre, in 1250, eleven months and ſome days after the taking of that city.

Gemel Eddin, an Arab hiſtorian, gives the following portrait of Louis. "The king poſ-" ſeſſed a fine perſon, underſtanding, fortitude, " and religion. His good qualities attracted " the veneration of the Chriſtians, who had " great confidence in him: he might have " eſcaped from the Egyptians by flight, either " on horſeback or in a boat, but the generous " king never would abandon his army."

I have the honour to be, &c.

This work was publiſhed at two different times, and in three volumes, the firſt of which ended here, except a ſhort letter, expreſſive of the author's hopes and fears concerning the ſucceſs of his work. This is omitted, as likewiſe is the beginning of the next letter, being only a ſhort complimentary introduction to the ſecond volume, neither neceſſary nor intereſting, which might confuſe, but could not inform the reader. An interval of ſome months elapſed between writing of this and the following letter, during which the author returned to Grand Cairo. T.

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LETTER XXVI.

From Old Cairo to Tamieh. Leave Foſtat in the month of November: the Moſque of Atar Ennabi deſcribed, and reflections on the pilgrimages made thither. State of the plain of Egypt at this ſeaſon of the year: compariſons between the pyramids, the tomb of Mauſolus, and the Morai of Otaheite. Details on the plain of Mummies, the flints of Egypt, and the Dachhour or Acanthos. Arrival at Tamieh in the province of Fayoum.

To M. L. M.

Grand Cairo.

IT is now November, and the favourable ſeaſon to viſit the Said (*l*); the heat is temperate, and the flooded canals permit us to viſit the inland country by water. Embark we, therefore, on this river, which, with its multiplied branches, for the ſpace of two hundred leagues, fertilizes

(*l*) All Upper Egypt from Old Cairo to Aſſouan, or Syene, is called Said by the Arabs.

that

that valley where the wiſe and the great have, for three thouſand years, gone to admire the ruins of a people who exerted every faculty to make their works immortal.

We leave Old Cairo, the north wind drives us rapidly againſt the current, the waters have receded from the hills, but the low parts are ſtill inundated, though the majeſtic Nile, ſilently, and gently, keeps retiring; verdure and harveſt follow his footſteps, and inceſſantly ſpring where he ſo lately trod. Here cucumbers and water melons are planted, and there the plough lightly furrows the ſurface, eaſily drawn by oxen, under the care of a ſingle man. Dourra and corn already cover the high lands.

We are now paſſing Jeziret Dahab, the golden iſle, a meadow abounding in cattle, on which is a ſmall village. On our left we leave the grand moſque of Atar Ennabi, built on the bank of the river, much frequented by the inhabitants of Cairo, and the object of a famous pilgrimage. It contains a ſtone on which the Muſſulmen believe the marks of the feet of Mahomet are impreſſed; for this reaſon they call it Atar Ennabi, the veſtige of the prophet. The officiating Sheik takes care to encourage this pious faith, and to publiſh the miracles performed;

formed; for, as his wealth wholly centres in this relic, he preſerves it as a thing moſt precious, and covers it with a ſumptuous veil, which he lifts up for devotees, from whom he expects a ſmall preſent. The following account I had from a lady of Cairo, the wife of a French merchant (*m*), who has lived forty years in Egypt.

" I had often heard of Atar Ennabi, and its " miracles; and was deſirous to ſee this famous " ſtone. My dreſs, exactly reſembling that of " the Turkiſh women, made me ſuppoſed one " of them; and I went to the moſque at an " hour when there were not many people. I " requeſted the Sheik to ſhow me the relic, and " two Turkiſh women of conſequence enter- " ing at the ſame time, teſtified the like deſire. " He uncovered it, and, after burning ſome " rich perfumes, and reciting paſſages from the " Coran, ſaid, ' Behold that ſacred mark! " Wonder at the footſtep of the greateſt of pro- " phets, of Mahomet!' The Turkiſh women " repeated, with enthuſiaſm, ' Yes, it is indeed " the footſtep of Mahomet, the greateſt of

(*m*) M. Maynard, whoſe probity and knowledge have gained him the eſteem of the French, Copts, Turks, and Arabs.

" pro-

" prophets!' For my own part, I aſſure you, " notwithſtanding the moſt ſcrupulous atten- " tion, I ſaw nothing but a ſmooth ſtone, well " perfumed, on which I could diſcover neither " traces of a foot nor any thing ſimilar."

How ſtrange is the credulity of man, which enſlaves his reaſon, and makes him ſee, feel, and hear what never exiſted! Thus, M. Tournefort, being preſent when a tomb was opened in one of the Archipelago iſles, in which the people were convinced they ſhould find a vampire, ſaw only a livid corpſe, half worm-eaten; while the Greeks perceived an entire body of pure fleſh and blood, which, according to them, had not the leaſt offenſive ſmell.

Norden, in his delightful views of Egypt, has well depicted the moſque of Atar Ennabi and its environs, but was deceived in placing Memphis at Giza; though he ought not to be therefore reproached, for he himſelf confeſſes he doubts this was not the real ſite of that ancient city, which I imagine I have perfectly determined, in the preceding letters; nor ſhould I again have mentioned that error, into which ſeveral travellers have fallen, did I not fear others might likewiſe be deceived. Thus miſled,

the

the learned Jablonſki, (*n*) vainly, has employed all his ſagacity to diſcover what he ſuppoſed to be truth.

At ſome diſtance from Atar Ennabi, a ſmall village is ſeen, through the tufted date-trees, where the Turks have a moſque, and the Copts a convent, named Der Ettin, the monaſtery of the figs; no doubt, becauſe this fruit is there abundant. There are two ſpecies; the firſt grows on the very branches of the ſycamore, but is dry, and little eſteemed; the latter, the ſame that is cultivated in France, is juicy, ſweet, and of an exquiſite flavour. On the eaſtern bank are villages, built on the tops of artificial mounts, to which the men and cattle retire during the inundation. Lucerne, ſown as the Nile withdraws its waters, already forms a verdant zone around theſe ſmall iſles. Wandering Arab tribes have pitched their tents on the ſide of ſandy hills, to profit by the river, and purchaſed, during ſome months, the right to ſend their cattle to graze in meadows which they forſake, when the paſturage fails. Martyrs to that liberty they paſſionately love, theſe uncon-

(*n*) This falſe poſition of Memphis induced him, alſo, to affirm the temple of Serapis was erected in the iſle of Raouda, which is another error.

querable people prefer the horrors of the deſert to all the advantages of ſociety, fly the very ſhadow of ſlavery, and, ever on their guard againſt tyranny, on the leaſt diſſatisfaction, ſtrike their tents, pack them upon their camels, ravage the open country, and, laden with booty, hide themſelves among burning ſands, whither they cannot be purſued, and which they only dare inhabit. The ſcourge of Egypt, which they regard as their patrimony, they are the irreconcilable enemies of the Turks, who fear and abhor them (*o*).

Paſſing the village of Bouſir, we are oppoſite the grand pyramids, which riſe ſix hundred perpendicular feet high, and, as our boat follows the windings of the river, their ſummits deſcribe ſegments of circles in the horizon. With what majeſty do theſe mountains of man riſe to the regions of air! Awful in their age, how often has the riſing ſun enlightened them, ſcorched their burning ſides at noon, and gilded them as he ſet! During how many ages have they, keeping pace with the inconceivably ſwift motion of the earth, annually encircled this

(*o*) This hatred gave birth to the French expreſſion, *Traiter quelqu'un de Turc à More*: that is to ſay, with the rigour of a Turk towards an Arab.

grand

grand luminary! Man then has conſtructed durable edifices, and theſe edifices are tombs! Some authors, imagining the damage occaſioned by violently opening the grand pyramid was the effect of time, have calculated how many ages they may ſtill endure; but, the principle being falſe, they are infinitely ſhort of the truth. To me it ſeems impoſſible to ſay when they ſhall ceaſe to be. Thouſands of ages hence, if undiſturbed by any grand revolution in the earth, travellers, from enlightened nations, ſhall go to admire theſe vaſt monuments; and ſay, Europe ſcarcely had a few ſavages ſcattered over her foreſts when a learned nation erected theſe ſuperb mauſoleums, toward the four cardinal points of heaven, as monuments of its piety and aſtronomical knowledge!

Melons, peculiar to Egypt, named Abd Hellaoui, the ſlave of mildneſs, are cultivated in the neighbouring villages: firm and brittle, like the apple, though leſs ſweet than other melons, they are preferred, becauſe, during the heats, they are very agreeable, nutritive, and healthy. Here, alſo, is a ſpecies of lettuce, with large, ſmooth, and high leaves, much eſteemed: whole fields are covered with them, being eaten in prodigious quantities, and their ſeed uſed to make oil.

Hamlets are ſeen on the right and left, as we advance, whoſe inhabitants are tilling the land, which, in four months, will yield them abundant returns. The village of Halouan appears on the eaſtern bank, ſurrounded by date-trees, where the Mekias was when the Arabs conquered Egypt. Memphis ſtood on the oppoſite ſhore, where, preſerving its name, the village of Menph now ſtands. Strabo, Pliny, and Abulfeda have deſcribed its ruins, and put this beyond doubt. Here, ſtill are heaps of rubbiſh; but the columns and remarkable ſtones the Arabs have tranſported to Cairo, and placed them, without taſte or order, in their buildings and moſques. This city extended almoſt to Saccara, and was nearly ſurrounded by lakes, which ſtill in part ſubſiſt; theſe were croſſed to bear the dead to the ſepulchres of their fathers. Their tombs, dug in the rock, and cloſed by a ſtone of proportionate ſize, were covered with ſand; and theſe bodies, embalmed with ſuch care, preſerved with ſo much reſpect, the inhabitants of Saccara drag from their reſting place, and, ſhamelefs, ſell them to foreigners. This is the plain of mummies; and here is the well of birds, which is deſcended by the aid of a rope: it leads into ſubterranean galleries, filled with earthen

earthen veſſels, which contain the ſacred birds. They are ſeldom found whole, becauſe the Arabs break them to ſearch for idols of gold. They never take travellers to the places where they have found the moſt precious things, but carefully cloſe them; and have ſecret paſſages by which they deſcend. The duke De Chaulnes, when travelling in Egypt, penetrated far into theſe labyrinths; ſometimes on his knees, and, at others, crawling. Preinſtructed by the honourable Wortley Montague, he carefully viſited Egypt, and came to one of theſe paſſages, which was cloſed, at the entrance, by branches of the date-tree, interwoven, and covered with ſand, where he obſerved hieroglyphics, in relief, executed with the utmoſt perfection: but his offers could not prevail on them either to let him take caſts or drawings of the figures (*p*). The duke thinks theſe hieroglyphics, ſo highly finiſhed as to give a perfect image of the objects they repreſent, might become a key to thoſe the ſimple outlines of which are only traced, and form a kind of alphabet to that unintelligible tongue. Be this as it may, I ſhall propoſe means, in a letter on that ſubject, to attempt the

(*p*) Mémoire ſur les hieroglyphes du puits de Saccara, par M. le duc De Chaulnes.

explanation of theſe myſterious characters, and read, on Egyptian monuments, the moſt ancient hiſtory of the world.

Along the mountains which bound Saccara, on the weſt, are ſeveral pyramids, the largeſt of which ſeem as high as thoſe of Giza. Indulge me in ſome reflections, which obtrude themſelves upon my mind, at the ſight of edifices that attract and fix my attention. Did theſe mauſoleums originate in the pride of the Pharaohs; and muſt we attribute their conſtruction to vanity? So various writers have thought. But leave we an opinion, which has no origin in the human heart. Kings build not palaces to inhabit when dead. A more imperious ſenſation, a fear of the future, a perſuaſion of what muſt happen after life, induced them to raiſe theſe magnificent tombs (*q*). Religion taught them, that, ſo long as their bodies were preſerved from corruption, their ſouls would not forſake them; and that, in three thouſand years, they ſhould be reſtored to life. This belief occaſioned them to raiſe buildings which the genius of the greateſt architects endeavoured to render inacceſſible; the pyramidal form was given

(*q*) Herodotus, Euterpe.

them,

them, as the moſt durable; which form, alſo, referred to their worſhip, by rendering homage to the ſun, whoſe rays it imitated (*r*). If ſo, here is a manifeſt proof this ancient people believed the immortality of the ſoul. Kings, now, as heretofore, are well ſatisfied with this world: for them flowers and harveſts ſpring; all nature ſmiles upon them; and had they the faith of the Egyptian monarchs, we ſhould behold them produce miracles, by which they would endeavour to aſcertain their return to earth. The religion of Egypt paſſed into Greece, and Artemiſia built a mauſoleum for her huſband, in the pyramidal form, which roſe one of the ſeven wonders of the world. This ſuppoſition of an immortal ſoul, found among iſlanders, ſeparated from every enlightened nation by immenſe ſeas, has produced a monument which may well ſurpriſe us. The people of Otaheite, unaſſiſted by

(*r*) Pliny, lib. xxxvi. ſays the obeliſks were conſecrated to the ſun, whoſe rays they repreſented, as their Egyptian name indicated; for they, as well as the pyramids, were, in Egyptian, named *Pyramua, Sun's rays.* Vide Jablonſki, tom. III. The Greeks firſt gave them the name of obeliſks; leaving to the pyramids that of *Pyramis*, from Πυρ, fire; in which they have preſerved the ancient etymology. Obeliſks were firſt conſecrated to the ſun, becauſe, by their ſhadows, they knew the hour of the day.

metal tools, have cut ſtones, exceedingly hard, and formed a pyramid, where the body of Oberea, their queen, repoſes. Round this morai, relations and friends, with religious retroſpect, ſhed pious tears, and the ſpirit of Oberea finds conſolation at beholding their grief and affection (*s*).

Let us leave the gloomy deſerts of Saccara, where we walk upon graves, thoſe high pyramids, which inſpire melancholy contemplation, and the lake, over which they bore the dead, that brings the fable of Charon to recollection. We are once more in our boat! With what pleaſure does the ſight, fatigued by the glittering ſcorched ſand, dwell on verdant proſpects, the pure ſky, the majeſtic river, and fields which every inſtant preſent new ſources of plenty. Having endured the fearful picture of ſterility, what an inexpreſſible charm is it to view the fecundity of nature, who waits the man, expiring in the deſert he traverſes, to impart ſudden delight, and a new ſource of life.

We are ſeven leagues above Old Cairo; and here the Nile, impeded by rocks to the eaſt, ran weſtward, and watered the ſands of Libya. Ac-

(*s*) Hawkeſworth's Voyages, vol. ii. page 166.

cording

cording to Herodotus (*t*), one of the Pharaohs raiſed a mound, and turned its courſe between the mountains, forcing it to empty itſelf into the bay that then overflowed all the Delta, and thus gave birth to that celebrated iſland, which ſlowly encroaches upon the Mediterranean. The ancient bed, which the Arabs call *Bahr bela ma*, a ſea without water, may ſtill be traced: it is every where ſtrewed with the remains of boats, by which it was formerly navigated, now petrified, very large parts of which I have ſeen brought to Grand Cairo. A long bank is ſtill found, between Saccara and Dachhour, thrown up to defend Memphis from the inundation, if it ſhould break the mound; and alſo from the torrents of ſands which the winds drove from the Libyan hills.

The iſle of Terfaye is at ſome diſtance from this elbow; here they are beginning to plant water-melons and cucumbers. The Egyptians cultivate a ſpecies of the latter very ſmall, called Couſa, of which they are exceedingly fond: it is mild, tender, and very delicate; they eat it in their ſallads, but the moſt uſual mode is to pick out the ſeed, and fill it up with haſhed meat,

(*t*) See Letter I.

rice,

rice, and ſpices; cooked thus, in its own juice, it is excellent. Beyond this iſland, Dachhour is ſeen, up the country, to which there is a canal, with a ſtone bridge of ſeveral arches. Strabo (*u*) and Ptolemy (*x*) place Acanthos ſix leagues from Memphis, on the ſame ſide of, and at a diſtance from, the river; which ſite perfectly correſponds to Dachhour. Here was a temple of Oſiris, now totally deſtroyed; but weſt of the village, on the ſide of the mountain, is a grand pyramid, a continuation of thoſe of Saccara and Giza.

The ſandy plains, which extend along the hills, are ſcattered with ſtones, vulgarly called Egyptian flints. Round, like pebbles, their rough ſurface does not invite any one to pick them up; but the grain, when broken, is found extremely fine, capable of being highly poliſhed, and moſt of them containing the figures of herbs, plants, and ſhrubs, ſo as often to form charming landſcapes. Theſe dark lines, moſt elegantly traced, are delightfully ſpread over a light ground, preſenting a vaſt variety of deſigns, and different ſhades. There is great choice, for the ſands are covered with them. I ſaw only one Jew at Cairo, who had the art to work

(*u*) Lib. xvii. (*x*) Lib. iv.

them

them into boxes and knife handles, for which reaſon he took care to be well paid. The ſmall hills beyond theſe plains abound with oyſter, and other petrified ſhells. Proceeding ſouth, from Acanthos, we traverſe a vaſt country, the low fields of which are watered and fertiliſed, at this ſeaſon of the year, by rivulets. Theſe valleys are now covered with corn, dourra, and verdure: ſome months hence, the Nile having quitted them, they will become a deſert. At the far end of this plain is the village of Tamieh, to which a canal is cut.

We now, Sir, enter the fertile province of Arſinoë, at preſent Fayoum, the country of wonders; where are the labyrinth, and its twelve palaces; the lake Mœris, and its pyramids. After tranſcribing the ancients, I will add an exact deſcription of the preſent ſtate of theſe places, the monuments and ruins that ſtill remain, and leave you, Sir, to conjecture what they once were.

I have the honour to be, &c.

LETTER XXVII.

The topography of the province of Fayoum: inquiries concerning its monuments, the poſition of which is aſcertained by the ancients, and the remaining ruins: ſite of the labyrinth, confirmed by Herodotus, Pliny, Diodorus, Ptolemy, and the remains of Balad Caroun, and Caſr Caroun: deſcription of this wonderful place, with reflections on this ſubject: details on the lake Mœris: its extent, hitherto uncertain, determined by quotations beforetime uſed for a purpoſe the very reverſe: its conſtruction, canals, and ſluices fully diſplayed; with its preſent circumference.

To M. L. M.

Grand Cairo.

EGYPT contains no monuments which more have excited inquiries and diſputes, among the learned, than the lake Mœris, and the labyrinth; which, as I ſaid, this province contains. The extent of the one, and the ſite of the other, have by turns, been conteſted. Geographers, to conciliate all parties, have created two labyrinths.

rinths (*y*). Some writers have allowed the lake Mœris an immenſe circumference (*z*): Others, placing it in fairy land (*a*), have employed the charms of wit to ridicule the credulity of hiſtorians. Theſe contradictions have darkened the clouds of uncertainty, and concealed truth. Let us endeavour to find her, by citing the ancients, who ſometimes have been falſely interpreted, by carefully following Strabo, who has exactly deſcribed what he, like an enlightened traveller, viſited; and, particularly, by a faithful account of thoſe remaining monuments he mentions. "Quitting Acanthos (*b*), we leave, "toward Arabia, Aphroditopolis (*c*), where "the ſacred white ox is kept." (The village Atfih, according to the moſt learned geographers (*d*), is the place where the city of Venus ſtood.) "Beyond the Nile is the He-"racleotic prefecture, ſituate in a large iſland." The two canals, cut from the river to the lake, the one from the village of Bouch, and the

(*y*) D'Anville, Mémoires ſur l'Egypte.

(*z*) Rollin, Hiſt. ancienne. Boſſuet, Diſ. ſur. l'Hiſt. Univ.

(*a*) Voltaire,

(*b*) Strabo, lib. xvii.

(*c*) The city of Venus.

(*d*) Ptolemy, lib. iv. D'Anville, Mém. ſur l'Egypte. Pococke.

other

other paſſing near Tamieh, form this iſland. The remarkable ruins found near Bayamout ſeem to indicate the ſite of Heraclea (*e*), the capital of that province. Here are two ruinous pyramids which contain only a few layers of ſtones. Strabo continues, "Near Heraclea a "canal runs, which, dividing into two branches, "includes a ſmall iſland, and traverſes the pre-"fecture of Arſinoë, the fineſt and richeſt in "Egypt." If we follow this ancient geographer on the map, we ſhall find theſe places have ſuffered little change, and ſhall be conducted directly to Fayoum, the capital of all this country, a modern town; though a league north-eaſt of its walls are hills of ruins, in which we diſcover veſtiges of Arſinoë (*f*). The Arabs collect the ſands from theſe ruins, and ſift them, to find ſeals and medals. At ſome diſtance an obeliſk reſts on its pedeſtal, the ſole monument which has braved the injuries of time, and ravages of barbarians, twenty-two feet in circumference at the baſe, and about fifty high. Its ſides abound in hieroglyphics, divided into co-

(*e*) Named the Great, to diſtinguiſh it from another city of Hercules, in Lower Egypt, near Canopus.

(*f*) The ancient Crocodilopolis, where the ſacred crocodiles were kept. The Greeks having conquered Egypt, called it Arſinoë.

lumns,

lumns, and frequently defaced: its corners are broken, and the fine block of granite of which it is formed is damaged to about one half of its height. Strabo forſakes us here, to deſcribe the lake Mœris, not far from Arſinoë, and the labyrinth on its borders; he does not preciſely mark the ſite, but Herodotus and Ptolemy do, and fix it on the Libyan ſide, near the banks of the lake (*g*). Let us continue our route.

Quitting Fayoum, and proceeding weſtward, we croſs the grand canal Bahr Youſeph, the river of Joſeph. In the village of Neſle, lying to the left, are no traces of antiquity. After a journey of two hours, north-weſt, a ſandy and ſterile plain is found; and, preſently, mountains of ruins are diſcovered, nearly a league in extent. The firſt heap the Arabs call Balad Caroun, the village or town of Caroun; the ſecond Caſr Caroun, the palace of Caroun (*y*). In

(*g*) Herodotus, lib. ii. Ptolemy, lib. iv.

(*y*) The Arab hiſtorians deſcribe Caroun as a very powerful man, and ſay he could load ſeveral camels with the keys of the apartments that contained his treaſures, from which unanimous aſſertion we may collect a truth. In Egypt, perhaps, the word Caroun ſignified an employment with which the boatman was honoured who ferried the bodies of the kings over the lake Mœris, to depoſit them in the labyrinth,

In the ſpace between, enormous ſtones are every where ſcattered; but the moſt remarkable remains are at the extremities. Amidſt the ruins of Caſr Caroun is a large building, ſeveral apartments of which ſtill are ſtanding, and full of the ſhafts of columns; round it is a portico, half demoliſhed; and ſtairs are found, by ſome of which they aſcended to the upper ſtories, and by others deſcended to thoſe under ground. The attention is particularly fixed by ſeveral narrow, low, and very long cells, which ſeem to have had no other uſe than that of containing the bodies of the ſacred crocodiles, brought hither from Crocodilopolis, where the prieſts kept, and the people adored, them. Theſe remains, lying towards Libya, a league from Birquet Caroun, formerly the lake Mœris, can only correſpond with the labyrinth, to which the ancients (z) aſcribe this ſite, and do not notice any

labyrinth, of which he was guardian; and, doubtleſs, the ſame title appertained to him who performed the ſame office for the inhabitants of Memphis over that lake. Suppoſing this conjecture true, we ſhall here find the origin of the Grecian Charon, and the reaſon of the Arabs calling theſe ruins the palace of Caroun

(z) Strabo, lib. xvii. Herodotus, lib. ii. Ptolemy lib. iv. All agree in placing the labyrinth beyond the city of Arſinoë, to-

any city ſo ſituated. Let us read the deſcription of this famous place, now, in part, covered by ſands, in Herodotus, that we may form a juſt idea of it.

" The twelve kings (*k*), elected by the " Egyptians, built the labyrinth, on the bank " of the lake Mœris, on the ſame ſide with the " city of the crocodiles, which appears to me " to ſurpaſs all that fame has ſaid. If we ex- " amine the conſtruction of the walls, and the " nature of the labour, we ſhall find it impoſſi- " ble to eſtimate the immenſe coſt of this build- " ing. The temple of Epheſus is one of the " wonders of the world, as is that in the iſle of " Samos. Each pyramid, ſingly, equals, in " grandeur, the numerous and great works of " Greece; yet theſe, however magnificent, " may not be compared to the labyrinth (*l*). " A roof of vaſt extent covers the twelve pala- " ces; entrance is found through twelve doors, " ſix facing the north and ſix the ſouth. They

toward Libya, and on the bank of the lake Mœris, which is the preciſe ſituation of theſe ruins.

(*k*) Herodotus, lib. ii.

(*l*) Recollect, ſir, a Greek is ſpeaking who read his hiſtory at the Olympic games, where he was crowned by the moſt enlightened judges of his age.

" are encloſed by a thick and extenſive wall: " the whole edifice conſiſts of two ſtories, the " one above the other under ground, and each " contains fifteen hundred apartments. I viſit- " ed the firſt, and relate what I have ſeen; as " to the ſecond, the keepers would not ſuffer " me to deſcend, ſaying, the bodies of the " kings, who built them, and thoſe of the ſa- " cred crocodiles, were there preſerved; of " theſe, therefore, I can only relate what I " have been told. Human induſtry has diſ- " played all its powers in the diſtribution of " the upper ſtory. The porticos, the paſſages, " from halls to chambers, from chambers to " cabinets, from cabinets to terraces, and from " terraces into other apartments, form wind- " ings ſo numerous, and ſo different, I was " never weary of admiring the art with which " they had been conſtructed. Walls, roofs, " all are of ſtone; various figures, artfully " ſculptured, are ſeen, here and there. Round " the halls are ſtately columns, moſtly of " white marble. A pyramid, each of its ſides " two hundred and fifty feet in width, and " through which is the deſcent to the ſubterra- " nean chambers, terminates the labyrinth."

Such is the deſcription of Herodotus; and though

though that of Strabo (*m*), who viſited the ſame place, many ages after him, does not exactly accord, it ſtill confirms this account in general; deſcribes winding and various paſſages, and ſo artfully contrived it was impoſſible to enter any one of the palaces; or leave it, having entered, without a guide. Strabo ſays, magnificent columns ſurrounded the principal apartments; the walls were built with vaſt ſtones, and, on the top of the roof, an immenſe platform was ſeen, which ſeemed a plain of rock, at beholding which the mind was aſtoniſhed. It is true he pretends the labyrinth contained twenty-ſeven palaces, where the ſtates of Egypt aſſembled, at certain periods, for the diſcuſſion of affairs, moſt important to government and religion; but it is probable the twelve, mentioned by Herodotus, were afterward divided into twenty-ſeven parts, or that, in the interval of ages between theſe two hiſtorians, the edifice had been enlarged. Diodorus Siculus, Pliny, and Pomponius Mela, deſcribed, without having ſeen, the labyrinth, copying and embelliſhing the two firſt authors; but gave no new information. The founder of the labyrinth is unknown; each

(*m*) Lib. xvii.

writer (*n*) names one or ſeveral, and moſtly different, which variety of opinions indicates it was not the work of one but of ſeveral kings.

This monument, regarded by Pliny as the moſt aſtoniſhing effort of human genius, no more is to be found, except amid the ruins of Balad Caroun and Caſr Caroun. Hereafter, when Europe ſhall have reſtored to Egypt the ſciences it received thence, perhaps, the ſands and rubbiſh which hide the ſubterranean part of the labyrinth will be removed, and precious antiquities obtained. Who can ſay but the diſcoveries of the learned were preſerved in this aſylum, equally impenetrable to the natives and foreigners? If the duſt of Herculaneum, an inconſiderable city, has preſerved ſo many rarities, and inſtructive remains of art and hiſtory, what may not be expected from the fifteen hundred

(*n*) Herodotus ſays the labyrinth was built by the twelve kings who governed Egypt, when Pſammetichus, one of the twelve, poſſeſſed himſelf of ſovereign power. Strabo attributes its conſtruction to Iſmandes, whoſe body, he ſays, repoſes in the pyramid, ſtanding at one of its extremities. Pliny, that it was built by Peteſucus or Tithoë, but, as he cites contradictory authorities, he but augments incertitude. Diodorus ſuppoſes the labyrinth is the work and the tomb of Mendes. Pomponius Mela attributes it to Pſammetichus.

apart-

apartments in which the archives of Egypt were depoſited, ſince the governors aſſembled here to treat on the moſt important affairs of religion and ſtate? But I muſt not thus indulge in conjecture: it is time to ſpeak of the lake Mœris, remains of which may be here diſcovered ſufficiently grand to fix the attention. Herodotus (*o*) and Strabo (*p*) mark its ſite by declaring the labyrinth was on its banks, and naming the cities that ſurrounded it. Acanthos to the ſouth, Aphroditopolis to the eaſt, and Arſinoe on the north. Diodorus (*q*) and Pliny (*r*) confirm theſe authorities, by placing it twenty-four leagues from Memphis, between the province ſo called, and that of Arſinoe, which unanimity gives every deſirable certitude to truth. Had this lake, however, totally diſappeared, like the lake Mareotis, doubts might be entertained, but, in the very place theſe hiſtorians deſcribe, a lake is ſtill ſeen, called Birquet Caroun, more than fifty leagues in circumference: wherefore, unleſs we reſiſt conviction, we muſt here acknowledge the remains of Mœris. By referring to the ancients, and ſcrupulouſly examining their teſtimony, we

(*o*) Lib. ii. (*p*) Lib. xvii. (*q*) Lib. i. (*r*) Lib. v.

may, perhaps, obtain light on a topographical queſtion which has been greatly obſcured.

" The labyrinth I have deſcribed is ſtill leſs " ſurpriſing, ſays Herodotus, than the lake " Mœris, which is 3600 ſtadia, or 60 ſchœni, " in circumference, and equal to the baſe of " Egypt, next the ſea (*s*), extending from the " north

(*s*) Herodotus determines the ſchœnos, in Lower Egypt, at four miles, or a league and quarter; thus the ſixty ſchœni make ſeventy-five leagues. Strabo and Diodorus uſe other admeaſurements in their eſtimation, yet agree with Herodotus. The baſe of Egypt, then, is determined at ſeventy-five leagues, and, being equal in circumference to the lake Mœris, this circumference muſt alſo be ſeventy-five leagues. I am obliged to be thus circumſtantial becauſe this paſſage has been productive of many errors; moſt writers attending only to the firſt part of the period, in which Herodotus makes the lake 3600 ſtadia, and giving to each ſtadium its uſual value of about 100 fathoms, have made the lake Mœris 150 and 180 leagues in circumference; but whoever will examine the paſſage will find the 3600 ſtadia are determined to be ſixty ſchœni, or ſeventy-five leagues, and, conſequently, the author eſtimates by ſtadia of fifty fathoms. I know not if this has been before obſerved, but I know this paſſage, ill interpreted, has given birth to all the modern debates. Voltaire, with the arms of ridicule, has combated the exiſtence of a lake of 180 leagues; larger, ſays he, than Egypt. Rollin and Boſſuet, eſpecially, have maintained its exiſtence with heat. Several have diminiſhed its extent, making it ſome twenty leagues;

" north to the ſouth (*t*), and its greateſt depth " is three hundred feet. Two pyramids, built " on an iſland, near the middle, deſcend three " hundred feet beneath the waters, and riſe as " much above, which prove the lake to have " been dug by man. Each of them has a coloſ- " ſal ſtatue at the top, ſeated on a throne: their " total height is a ſtadium of ſix hundred " feet (*u*). The lake occupies land extremely " ſandy, and deprived of ſprings, its waters be- " ing ſupplied by the Nile, which flows into it " ſix months in the year; theſe waters are re- " turned to the river during the other ſix " months. In the firſt period, the fiſhery daily " produces a talent of ſilver for the royal trea- " ſury, and twenty minæ only in the ſecond.

leagues; and d'Anville, deſirous of conciliating all parties, has, in his map of Egypt, created a grand canal, and called it the lake Mœris. He has been no more fortunate than the others. The form and ſituation of this pretended Mœris directly contradict the moſt reſpectable authorities of hiſtory.

(*t*) Its preſent greateſt extent is from eaſt to weſt, but, formerly, it might reach from Arſinoe to the canal by which it diſcharged itſelf.

(*u*) Herodotus employs the ſtadium in both theſe paſſages, but having reduced it to fifty fathom in the firſt, and reſtored it to 100 in the ſecond, it is neceſſary to remark the ſtadium, here, is 600 feet.

" The natives ſay a canal is dug through the " mountain (*x*) which extends to, and com- " mands, Memphis. This is a diſcharge by which " the ſuper-abundant waters are carried weſt- " ward, among the Libyan ſands. I aſked " what had become of the earth dug from the " lake; and was aſſured it had been carried to " the river, and waſhed by the current into the " ſea."

The relations of Strabo and Herodotus mutually explain each other. " The province of " Arſinoe (*y*) contains the marvellous lake " Mœris, which, for its extent, colour, and " ſhores, reſembles a ſea. Deep as it is vaſt, it " receives, at the beginning of the inundation, " the waters, leſt they ſhould cover the fields " and habitations of men, through a large ca- " nal. When the Nile decreaſes, theſe waters " are returned by two other canals (thoſe of " Tamieh and Bouch), which, like the firſt, " water the lands: ſluices are formed, at the " head of the canals, which are opened, at plea- " ſure, to admit or return the waters (*z*)."

Though

(*x*) I have noted the ſituation of this canal in the map.

(*y*) Strabo, lib. xvii.

(*z*) Diodorus Siculus pretends it coſt fifty talents, or £. 6250,

Though this paſſage does not determine the extent of the lake, it proves it to have been very great. Diodorus Siculus follows Herodotus, who allows it to have been 3600 ſtadia, or ſeventy-five leagues in circumference. Pliny eſtimates it at two hundred and fifty thouſand paces, near eighty leagues: thus the ancients agree on a point ſo much diſputed by the moderns, none of whom give ſufficient proofs of their opinion to make it univerſal. The lake, at preſent, is only about fifty leagues in circumference; but this diminution does not prove Herodotus and Pliny were deceived. After ſo many revolutions in Egypt, within theſe two thouſand years, it may have undergone greater changes.

Examine the map, Sir, and you will perceive the chain of mountains, on the left of the Nile, continued almoſt from the cataracts to Fayoum, ſuddenly departs toward Libya, and, returning

£. 6250, to open theſe ſluices: it is difficult to diſcover what could occaſion him to adopt this fable. Herodotus and Strabo, who viſited and carefully examined theſe places, mention no ſuch thing; nor do Pliny and Pomponius Mela, who, citing all the ancients had written relative to the lake Mœris, would not have omitted a fact ſo extraordinary. Its great improbability, added to the ſilence of hiſtorians, demonſtrate the falſity of this aſſertion.

eaſt-

eaſtward, forms an immenſe baſon, though lower than the bed of the river. This land was formerly covered by barren ſands, becauſe the ſtream, impeded by downs and rocks, could not water them. A king, named Mœris, perfectly acquainted with the diſpoſition of the lands, conceived one of the nobleſt projects that ever entered the mind of man, which he had the glory to execute. He reſolved to change this deſert into a uſeful lake, and, when ſwarms of men aſſembled had dug and cleared the ſoil, in various places, he cut a canal, forty leagues in length, and three hundred feet wide, to introduce the waters of the Nile. This grand canal, which is ſtill entire, is known by the name of Bahr Youſeph, the river of Joſeph; it begins near Tarout Eccherif, and ends at Birquet Caroun, and muſt have coſt immenſe ſums, being, in many parts, cut through the rock. To relieve Egypt from the ſuperfluous waters which, in theſe diſtant ages, remained too long on the lands, then much lower than at preſent, and occaſioned ſterility, was not ſufficient. This great prince rendered them uſeful to agriculture by cutting two other canals, from the lake to the river, and digging near their mouths ſluices which were ſhut during the increaſe of the Nile,

when

when the waters, entering through the canal of Joſeph, collected in the vaſt circumference of the lake Mœris, where they were bounded by mounds and mountains. When the Nile decreaſed theſe ſluices were opened, and a body of water near eighty leagues in circumference, and thirty feet higher than the uſual level of the river (*a*), formed a ſecond inundation, directed at will: one part was returned to the Nile, for the purpoſe of navigation, another, branched into innumerable rivulets, watered the fields, and gave fertility even to ſandy hills. This work, the moſt vaſt and uſeful the earth ever contained, united every advantage, and ſupplied the deficiencies of a low inundation, by retaining water which would have uſelefsly been expended in the ſea. It was ſtill more highly beneficial, when the increaſe was too great, by receiving that injurious ſuperfluity which would have prevented ſeed-time. Fearful this artificial ſea

(*a*) The ſource of the canal of Joſeph, being in the Thebais, carried the waters of the Nile, when they began to increaſe, to the lake Mœris, where, being retained on one ſide by mountains, and on the other by mounds and ſluices, dug on the canals of Bouch and Tamieh, they equalled the height of the inundation, that is to ſay, were nearly thirty feet higher than the uſual level of the river.

might

might break its bounds, and occaſion dreadful ravages, a canal was cut, through the mountain, by which the ſuperabundant waters were diſcharged among the Lybian ſands. Hiſtory knows not a work ſo glorious, nor is it wonderful antiquity eſteems it above the pyramids and labyrinth; for with the grandeur of the enterpriſe it included the happineſs of the people. Thus the Egyptians, who deteſted the kings by whom they were forced to remove mountains that pyramids might be raiſed, bleſſed the memory of Mœris, and his name is everlaſting.

This lake has nearly loſt all its advantages; the barbarians, in whoſe hands Egypt has remained for twelve centuries, have deſtroyed or ſuffered moſt of its monuments to periſh. The lake Mareotis is dry, the canal of Alexandria no longer navigable, and Mœris is only fifty leagues in circumference. Were the canal of Joſeph cleanſed, in which the mud is very deep, the ancient mounds repaired, and the ſluices reſtored; this lake might again ſerve the ſame purpoſes, might prevent the evils of a too great, and ſupply the defects of a too feeble, inundation; might extend, as formerly, from Neſſe and Arſinoe to the Lybian mountains, and ſhow the aſtoniſhed traveller a ſea which man had made.

Its

Its depth, of three hundred feet, according to the ancients, may be exaggerated, but much leſs than it is ſuppoſed. Its bottom is a baſon, formed by mountains, and is very low; ſince the Nile runs into it, through the canal of Tamieh (*b*); and though mud has, for ages, collected, it is ſtill very deep. Should theſe reaſons prove inſufficient to make us adopt the opinion of the ancients, they, at leaſt, ſhould induce us to ſuſpend our judgment, and examine times and places, before we call their writings fabulous.

The pyramids Herodotus deſcribes no longer ſubſiſt, and, apparently, did not in the Auguſtan age, ſince Strabo does not mention them. On the north of Birquet Caroun we perceive a headland, which, doubtleſs, was formerly an iſland that ends in a rock, covered with ruins. This, perhaps, was the baſe of theſe ſepulchres, which having two coloſſal ſtatues, ſeated on thrones, on their ſummits, and riſing out of a ſea, the waters muſt have formed a ſight ſuch as the whole

(*b*) The reverſe happened formerly; the ſuperabundant waters were carried to the lake Mœris, by the canal of Joſeph, which was deeper, and which preſerved them by means of ſluices. They were afterwards returned to the Nile, when low, through the canals of Tamieh and Bouch.

world

world could nowhere elſe afford. I do not give theſe conjectures as realities, but, you will own, Sir, it was not more difficult to build pyramids in an iſland of the lake Mœris, than thoſe which ſtand near Giza. But I forbear: I fear having been too circumſtantial already, though I have thought it abſolutely neceſſary, while, among ſo many contradictions, I have endeavoured to diſcover that truth, which you, Sir, and ſuch as you, paſſionately love.

I have the honour to be, &c.

LET-

LETTER XXVIII.

On the productions of the province of Fayoum: its manufactures, arts, and inhabitants; its fields, ſhaded by orange-groves, and cluſtering roſe trees; the flowers of which, diſtilled, yield excellent roſe-water. The abundant fiſhery of the lake and canals, and the numerous water fowls. The capital city and its government.

To M. L. M.

Grand Cairo.

THE preceding letter, Sir, affords diſcuſſion, only, to the mind, and ruins to the eye. He who would tear away the veil with which a ſpace of three thouſand years has covered theſe monuments muſt expect no better; but I will now endeavour to relieve you by an account of the preſent ſtate of Fayoum, hoping the ſubject will furniſh pictures leſs barren. The moſt pleaſant ſeaſon here, is the approach of winter. The mild and grateful winds, like thoſe of France, in the fineſt days of ſpring, are ſtill more pleaſing, ſweet, and odoriferous. The canals are full

full to the brim, and the fields covered with graſs, vegetables, and corn. The beauties of nature every where abound, for this province is one of the wealthieſt and moſt fruitful of Egypt. Strabo (*c*), eighteen centuries ago, thus deſcribed it. "The province of Arſinoë ſurpaſſes all "others in beauty, riches, and the variety of its "productions. It, alone, produces the moſt "perfect olives, and from which the Egyptians "might make excellent oil, were they leſs "negligent, for the olive is no where elſe found "in Egypt, if we except thoſe reared in the "gardens of Alexandria, the fruit of which is "not proper to make oil (*d*). It abounds in "wines, corn, vegetables, and ſeeds of all "kinds." Could this hiſtorian return to Fayoum he would find it prodigiouſly changed; the labyrinth deſtroyed; marſhes, where palaces were; mud-wall villages, where cities flouriſhed; canals almoſt dry; and Mœris reduced to

(*c*) Lib. xvii.

(*d*) Since the canal of Alexandria has become dry, nine months in the year, theſe gardens, with their olive and all their other trees, have diſappeared. I ſaw ſome in the orchards near Roſetta: they were very large, and the olives they yielded bigger than thoſe of the iſle of Crete, or Provence, from which, I am perſuaded, excellent oil might be made.

two-

two-thirds of its former extent: but he would recollect the ſame productions and the ſame abundance, wherever the waters can penetrate. The Copts ſtill cultivate the olive and the vine their forefathers planted, ſtill gather excellent grapes, of which they make a moſt agreeable white wine (*e*). The whole country is now covered with wheat, barley, and dourra, which riſe, in ſucceſſion, uninterruptedly, for ſeven or eight months. The tall flax, the ſugar-cane, and vegetables of all kinds, ſprout up, almoſt without culture; cucumbers, and near twenty ſpecies of melons, melting, ſweet, and moſt healthy, adorn the banks of the rivulets; cluſtering fruit trees, among which are the date, the fig, the banana, the caſſia, and the thorny nabc, which produces a ſmall tartiſh pear, are ſcattered over the plain. Amid this diverſity of trees and plants, foreſts of the roſe buſh grow near villages. In other provinces this fine ſhrub only ornaments gardens, here it is cultivated, and the

(*e*) Under the Ptolemies, and the Romans, the environs of Alexandria and the Sebennitic province produced very famous wines, but the Mahometans have deſtroyed the vine plants. They have left none, except in the province of Fayoum. The grapes, in general, which grow in the ſandy grounds of Egypt, are of an exquiſite flavour.

roſe water, diſtilled from its odoriferous flower, forms an extenſive branch of commerce. Fayoum ſupplies all Egypt, and the conſumption is very great. It is abundantly ſprinkled on the face and hands of perſons who viſit (*f*). The women waſh their bodies with it at the bath, and never dreſs themſelves without roſe water. Theſe cluſters of roſe buſhes, ſometimes ſurrounded by the orange tree in flower, produce a charming effect on the ſight, and a ſtill more charming one by their ſmell. The whole atmoſphere is impregnated, and the pleaſure of breathing the perfumes of the roſe, mingled with the ſweet emanations of orange flowers, is here exquiſite.

To this wealth of fertility Fayoum adds that of the fiſhery. The canals and lake ſwarm with fiſh, which are caught in prodigious quantities, and eat in the province, or carried to the neighbouring cities, and are as cheap as at Damietta. A medin (*g*) will purchaſe enough to ſuffice a man for a day. When the froſt and ſnow of winter is felt in the northern countries, innumerable flocks of birds reſort to the lake Mœris,

(*f*) The roſe-water of Fayoum has a delicious odour, which it long preſerves: the beſt is ſold at three ſhillings and four pence a bottle.

(*g*) A copper coin, plated, worth five farthings.

and

and the canals of Fayoum. The people catch abundance of geeſe with golden plumage and a moſt agrecable flavour, fat and delicate; ducks, teal, ſwans, the ſkins of which are uſed like furs, and pelicans, remarkable for their large beaks, in the form of a ſpatula. Theſe latter, the kings of aquatic birds, ſail on the ſurface of the lake, in numerous families, while the whiteneſs of their plumage forms a charming contraſt with the deep azure of the waters. Modern Egyptians preſerve ſome remains of that ancient veneration in which the ibis, crane, and ſtork, were held; forbear to net for them, and theſe birds, confiding in the clemency of man, are almoſt tame.

What pleaſure ſhould I feel could I deſcribe a happy people, amid all this abundance! but, alas! a monſtrous government, and anarchy, the enemy of order, and of laws, extinguiſhes genius, and, like a peſtilential wind, depopulates cities, and devours the country and its inhabitants. Men, who, in a climate ſo pure, and on a ſoil ſo fruitful, would poſſeſs mild and gentle manners, and enjoy the treaſures of prodigal nature, and thoſe benefits the arts produce, become barbarous, ſuperſtitious, and miſerable, under the yoke of thoſe inſatiable tyrants who fatten on their ſubſtance. Agriculture languiſhes, and the

ſands of Libya yearly encroach upon its domains; the fine provinces of Heracleotis and Arſinoë are reduced to a third of their former extent, if we only include the productive lands. Were the canals and mounds repaired, they would recover their ancient limits, and flouriſh as formerly. The climate, the earth, the waters, are the ſame; men and laws only are changed.

The cities of the crocodiles, of Hercules, and Ptolemaïs, are replaced by that of Fayoum, which retained a certain degree of grandeur in the time of Abulfeda. "Fayoum, capital of "the province ſo called, contains public baths, "markets, and colleges, which are under the "direction of the Shafeites, and Melchites (*h*). "It is divided by the canal of Joſeph, and ſur-"rounded by gardens(*i*)." Fayoum, at preſent, is only half a league in circumference, and ſtands on the eaſtern ſhore of the canal. The remainder is deſtroyed, and the colleges are no more. Houſes, built of ſun-dried bricks, preſent a gloomy aſſemblage of huts; their inhabitants are poor, and deprived of energy; their arts are

(*h*) Two Mahometan ſects.

(*i*) Abulfeda, deſcription of Egypt.

reduced

reduced to ſome manufactories of mats, coarſe carpets, and the diſtillation of roſe water. The town is governed by a cachef, under one of the beys of Grand Cairo. Several Arab ſheiks, who have lands in the neighbourhood, compoſe the council, and go to the divan, twice or three times a week, as ſummoned by the governor; their chief is held in great reſpect, but the members of adminiſtration cannot long enjoy concord; the continual wars, at Grand Cairo, diſturb the tranquillity of the provinces, and the poſſeſſors of lands and governments are expelled by the victorious faction. The plundered Arabs unite themſelves to the Bedouins, who, always, are ready to favour malcontents, in hopes of pillage, and who deſcend, like torrents, from the mountains, and deſolate the plains; nor do the undiſciplined troops ſent againſt them occaſion leſs diſorder, and the huſbandman is equally robbed by his enemies and defenders. When the Arabs are repulſed, they bury themſelves in the deſerts, loaded with ſpoil, where their hatred againſt the Turks ferments with the ſun's heat, and, when they feel themſelves ſufficiently ſtrong, they return to commit new ravages. Such is the fate of Egypt, ſuch the evils of deſpotiſm.

Permit me, Sir, to finiſh this letter by an extract from Strabo, which proves to what degree the care taken of the moſt cruel animals may triumph over their ferocity. "The people who "inhabit the prefecture of Arſinoë revere and "regard the crocodile as ſacred. The prieſts "preſerve one in a lake, for that purpoſe, and "name it Souchos (*k*), feeding it with bread, "meat, and wine, in preſence of ſtrangers, "whom a ſight like this fails not to attract. "Our hoſt, one of the reſpectable perſons who "ſhowed us the ſacred things, conducted us, "after dinner, to the lake, taking with him "ſmall cakes, roaſt meat, and a veſſel filled with "wine. The crocodile repoſed on the bank. "The prieſts approached: one of them opened "his jaws, another put in the cakes, meat, and "wine; after which repaſt the monſter deſcend-"ed, peaceably, into the water, and ſwam to-"wards the other ſide."

The Egyptians honoured the crocodile, becauſe it was conſecrated to Typhon, the evil genius, whoſe fury they dreaded; and imagined they might calm his wrath, and avoid the ca-

(*k*) This word comes from the Greek. The Egyptian name of the crocodile appears to have been Chamſah, which Herodotus calls it, or perhaps Timſah as called by the Arabs.

ſamities he inflicted on them, by revering an animal that was the ſymbol of himſelf. The eagerneſs with which the inhabitants of Celebes, at preſent, ſeek this monſter, the name of Sudara (*l*), or brother, they give to him, and the food they carry him, ſhould alſo have ſome foundation in the ancient religion of their country.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(*l*) Mr. (now ſir Joſeph) Banks relates ſome curious facts concerning the veneration the people of Celebes have for the crocodile. Hawkeſworth's Voyages, vol. iii. page 756.

LETTER XXIX.

Journey in the deſert, toward the Red Sea. The country, mountains, and ſands, neceſſary to croſs, to arrive at the monaſtery of St. Antony. Obſervations on the plants, animals, quarries of various marble and flints, found in the deſert. Manner in which the monks of St. Antony and St. Paul live. The proſpects from the ſummit of mount Colzoum: reflections on the great occurrences that have paſſed there.

To M. L. M.

Grand Cairo.

LET us continue our route, Sir. Returning to the Nile, by the canal of Bouch, we leave Maydoum behind us, where is the moſt ſouthern pyramid of Egypt, ſeveral hills, with hamlets, and the ruins of Aphroditopolis, which ſtood on the eaſtern ſhore, where Atfih now ſtands. The canal we have left emptied itſelf into the river, formerly, during ſix months in the year. At preſent, it runs, continually, to the lake Mœris,

Mœris, which no longer receives ſufficient waters, through the canal of Joſeph, half choaked up, to return them to the Nile.

There is nothing remarkable in Bouch; the houſes are of brick, and the roofs in the form of a dove-houſe, where the pigeons reſide, while the Egyptians live below. This cuſtom is obſerved throughout the Thebaïs: the houſes look tolerably at a diſtance, but the abodes of miſery in the midſt of abundance are every where found on entering.

The chain of mountains, eaſt of the river, approach very near, for ſeveral leagues, and leave only a ſmall extent of country, fit for tillage. This long ſlip of land, at the foot of ſterile rocks, is diverſified by villages, ſurrounded by groves, corn, vegetables, and fruit trees. Nature is decked in all her ſplendour, at the very gates of the deſert. Journeying upward, weſt of the Nile, we perceive Beniſouef, a town half a league in circumference, and whoſe moſques and high minarets, ſeen through the foliage of trees, preſent an agreeable proſpect. Its other edifices are mere mud-wall huts, or of brick, built without elegance or taſte. The induſtry of its inhabitants is wholly confined to the manufacturing of coarſe carpets, and their commerce

to

to the productions of their ſoil. Beniſouef is the reſidence of a bey, who, like the other governors of Egypt, collects arbitrary taxes, ſword in hand, encamping with his ſoldiers near the villages under his government, ſeveral months of the year. Having robbed the labourer of his hire, and torn the fruits of his induſtry from him by fear or violence, he proceeds to another part, to raiſe like contributions. I cannot make you conceive all the oppreſſions of theſe tyrants; the troops they command are only compoſed of outlaws, baniſhed their country, by their crimes, in whoſe hearts every feeling of nature and pity is extinct. Of this a ſingle trait, which the comte d'Antragues, who has lately quitted this country, was a witneſs of, may give you ſome idea. One of the collectors entered the hut of a poor woman, who had ſeveral children, and demanded the tax impoſed by the bey. She pleaded her poverty, and told him ſhe poſſeſſed only a mat and ſome earthen pots. He ſearched every where, and, finding a ſack of rice, prepared to carry it off. She conjured him to leave it, proteſting it was her whole ſubſiſtence, aſking if he would have her, the child ſhe ſuckled, and all her family, periſh with hunger. The barbarian, unmoved by words or tears, took the ſack

ſack of rice, and the wretched mother, driven to deſpair, ſnatched the child from her boſom, and daſhed it with force againſt the ground, exclaiming, Thou, monſter, ſhalt be anſwerable for his blood! After this horrid action, her tears ſuddenly ſtopped, and ſhe ſtood motionleſs, like a ſtatue, while the hardened wretch of a ſoldier, without ſeeming to be affected, went off with his prey. Such is the fate of the people of Egypt.

Oppoſite Beniſouef is the village of Bayad partly inhabited by Copts, through which is the road to the monaſteries of St. Antony and St. Paul, ſituated on mount Colzoum. I will give you a ſketch of theſe wild places, which deſerve the attention of naturaliſts, and likewiſe of the deſerts which lie between the Nile and the Red Sea.

Two leagues north of Bayad is a narrow valley, formed by Gibel Gebey, the mount of the ciſtern, and Hajar Mouſſoun, the marked ſtone, which leads to a ſandy plain, called Elbakara, the cow. On its eaſtern extremity is the mount Kaliel, or the well-beloved; its extent, which is all barren ſand, is ſeven or eight leagues in width, and much more from north to ſouth. In the hollows of the rocks, and beſide where the winter

winter torrents paſs, is a little verdure, produced by the Acacia, whence gum arabic is obtained, the ſena, the ſcorpion wood, the twiſted root of which is famous for curing the bite of this inſect, and ſome other plants. The oſtrich, the chamois, the gazella, and the tiger, which makes continual war on the others, dwell among theſe caverns, and bound acroſs the ſands, where they ſcarcely can find a blade of graſs. Here are flints of various colours, red, grey, black, blue, and all extremely fine in the grain. Their upper ſurface is indented and rough; that next the ſand, ſmooth and bright. The naturaliſt would no doubt, find, among the cliffs, and the beds of torrents, precious ſtones, particularly emeralds, formerly common in Egypt. At the foot of mount Kaliel we find ſprings of brackiſh water, ſurrounded by ſome few date-trees, which thirſt renders drinkable, neither wild beaſt nor man being able to obtain other. Above are the grots of the hermits, whom the zeal of the firſt ages of chriſtianity had brought to this fearful wilderneſs. After climbing Kaliel, we deſcend into the plain of Elaraba, or carts, as barren and burning as the firſt. Its ſurface is parched ſand, and ſcorching rocks ſurround it. It is croſſed by ſome winter torrents, and, though the ſun devours

devours vegetable ſubſtances, and robs plants and trees of life, it ripens ſtones, the moſt rare, on the ſides of the mountains. North of this plain are three marble quarries, red, white, and black: blocks, half cut in the rock, and others, diſperſed about, beſpeak the labour of men. The Pharoahs hence obtained thoſe hard poliſhed ſtones with which they coated their canals, and magnificent ſepulchres, carting them to the Nile, and bringing them, afterward, on rafts, to the foot of the pyramids (*m*). South of theſe is another quarry, of fine granite, which has been exceedingly hewn; a reſervoir of water, dug at a ſmall diſtance, ſupplied the workmen. Hermits' grots lie beyond, nor could the whole world have ſupplied a place more wild, or farther from all human intercourſe. Having aſcended part of mount Colzoum, we arrive at the monaſtery of St. Antony, which has no door: the

(*m*) Herodotus, Diodorus, and Pliny ſay, the marbles with which the pyramids were coated and the canals made, came from the mountains of Arabia; but, as the eaſtern part of Egypt, between the Nile and the Red Sea, was called Arabia, there is reaſon to believe the quarries here mentioned ſupplied theſe fine ſtones. The plain was named Elaraba becauſe of the numerous carts employed to tranſport theſe enormous maſſes.

monks

monks draw travellers up through the window, by a pulley. This is a neceſſary precaution againſt the Arabs. It is ſurrounded by a high thick wall, a quarter of a league in circumference, encloſing a large garden, where various fruit trees are cultivated, the cells of the monks, and a ſmall church where divine ſervice is performed. A canal receives the ſtreams of the mountains, and conducts them into the monaſtery; theſe, though ſomewhat briny, ſupply the neceſſities of life, and water the vegetables and fruits. The rules of theſe religious Copts are very auſtere, and their abſtinence rigid, for they drink wine only on the four grand annual feſtivals. Their food is paſte, mixed with the oil of ſeſama, ſalt fiſh, honey, and the productions of their garden. Their doctrine has been corrupted by ſchiſm, and their obſtinacy in the errors of monotheliſm is extreme; yet they believe they poſſeſs abſolute power over dæmons, ſerpents, and wild beaſts. When father Sicard viſited them, their ſuperior was in ſearch of the philoſopher's ſtone. While living in conſtant ſelf-denial of every ſocial pleaſure, he was in ſearch of gold. Theſe monks highly venerate the grotto of St. Antony, an obſcure retreat, dug in the mountain, where this father of monaſtic inſtitutions

inſtitutions lived, as in a tomb, ſurrounded by darkneſs and deſerts. A high craggy rock, a league in diameter, ſeparates this convent from that of St. Paul, the impoſſibility of climbing which obliges them to go round the mountain, which is two days' journey. This latter monaſtery, built on the eaſt ſide of mount Colzoum, is likewiſe inhabited by Copts, as poor, pious, and ignorant, as the former.

Seated on mount Colzoum, the Red Sea lies beneath our feet, near the end of which, far off, may be diſcovered that part where the leader of the Iſraelites, probably, paſſed with his whole people through the ſuſpended waves. To the ſouth-eaſt are the famous mounts Horeb and Sinai, where he received the tables of the ten commandments. The very aſpect of theſe places incites ſerious contemplation; we behold around us the country in which the moſt predominant of all religions firſt took birth. The Egyptian is paſt, but not the Jewiſh, notwithſtanding the opprobrium caſt upon this reproved nation. The Chriſtian and Mahometan extend over the earth. How fruitful in wonders have been the ſurrounding country, the mountains, and the ſea! Hiſtory is full of them, and the barbarians of theſe nations ſtill preſerve their memory.

Let

Let us deſcend Colzoum, and approach the Red Sea. Its ſhores are covered with innumerable ſhells, the form, colours, and beauty of which ſucceſſively fix the attention, and choice is embarraſſed by variety. The rocks are variegated by marine plants, the waters abound in corals, ſome white, others red as ſcarlet. To theſe curious objects add the marbles of the mountains, the precious mines they contain, the plants which ſpring beſide the torrents, the rare flints of the ſands, and you will allow, Sir, theſe are things that well deſerve the attention of the naturaliſt. True it is, knowledge muſt be purchaſed by ſo many fatigues and perils, it is neceſſary to be ſo long expoſed to the plundering Arabs, and the ſcorching heats of the ſun, that it is not ſurpriſing no learned man has hitherto dared to ſearch theſe deſerts. Let us leave them, Sir, and return to the Nile, whoſe banks are moſt delicious after ſuch a journey.

I have the honour to be, &c.

LET-

LETTER XXX.

The route from Bayad to Achmounain. Towns and villages on each ſide the river deſcribed, with their various aſpects and government: the two branches of the grand canal, Bahr Youſeph: ſacrifice to the ſun ſculptured on a rock, near Babain: reflections on the ſubject: remarks on the principality of Malaoui, dependent on Mecca, and the ſtately portico of Achmounain. The adventure of Father Sicard.

To M. L. M.

Grand Cairo.

THE northern breeze invites us to continue our journey. One of the advantages of the ſituation of Egypt is that of enjoying this ſalutary wind, more than nine months of the year: beſide tempering the exceſſive heats, diſſipating deſtructive vapours, and bearing the clouds into Abyſſinia, which, falling in rain, annually produce the inundation, it likewiſe impels boats againſt the rapid current. Profit we by its favourable breath, and proceed towards the Upper

Thebais. Seated on the deck, and borne on waters, whoſe ſurface is as high as the banks, we overlook the ſurrounding lands, and every moment have new proſpects. The minarets of Beniſouef are loſt in the horizon: other villages ſeem to approach. Here Berangiah half conceals itſelf under the date-tree ſhades; yonder Abou Ennour riſes, at the foot of the mountain; farther ſtill is Baibai, where the Copts preſerve the relicts of St. George, embelliſhed by the rich harveſts around it; for of itſelf it preſents nothing but huts, and a ſmall moſque. The beginning of Gibel Etteir, the mount of birds (*d*), is ſeen to the eaſt; it takes its name from the multitude of kites, hawks, eagles, pharoah fowl, and cormorants, which here collect, and hence dart upon their prey. Doves, and ſmall birds, people the woods, which are at the foot of the rocks: flocks of the ibis, crane, ſwan, and ſtork, reſort to the banks of the Nile, which they cover, during winter: flights of pigeons obſcure the air, more numerous in Egypt than in any other country of the globe, where hamlets and towns

(*d*) Birds of prey are very numerous and various in Egypt, becauſe they are not deſtroyed and find food in abundance. Small birds are more uncommon.

are

are vaſt pigeon-houſes, and where their dung is collected, with extreme care, to manure the beds of melons.

Weſt of the river is Fechnai, named Fenchi in the times of Greece: a large iſland oppoſite raiſes its verdant head above the waters, in part covered by various vegetables, cucumbers, and excellent melons. Not far diſtant is Abou Girga, where the Copts have a convent. Sherouna extends along the foot of the mount of birds. That coaſt is inhabited by independent Arabs, who pillage the boats they can ſurpriſe; and, when troops are ſent againſt them, conceal themſelves in the deſerts, the well-ſprings of which they know, and where the Turks dare not follow them. The ſtorm over, they return, armed, and ſeize their poſſeſſions. Travellers ſhould always be on their guard, keep centinel, and, during night, occaſionally fire their guns, nor ſuffer any boat to come near theirs, otherwiſe they riſk being robbed and maſſacred.

The eye naturally turns from the ſterile rocks, on the eaſt, to views of fruitful fields, on the weſt, where the land is cultivated to the very brink of the river. In the iſle of Sohra, is a hamlet, the ſite of which is charming, encircled by trees, corn-fields, verdure, and water.

What delightful abodes might a poliſhed nation form in the iſles of the Nile! The exotics of all hot countries might here be aſſembled; orange groves, myrtles, pomegranates, and roſe-trees planted; the Arabian jaſmin, odoriferous ſhrubs, and American magnolia, would thrive here wonderfully; the banana, the orange, the delicious pine-apple, and every fruit moſt excellent, would reward their labours. Surrounded by the prodigal wealth of nature, embelliſhed by art, their days would glide happily away, beneath theſe enchanted ſhades and bowers. Theſe, Sir, are but vague wiſhes, waſted in the wide and ſenſeleſs air; yet indulge me in the ſweet conſolation of imagining they ſhall ſome time be realiſed.

We approach the port of Miniah, a tolerable town, pleaſant, populous, and commercial, where a Cachef reſides, a cuſtom houſe is eſtabliſhed, and at which the boats coming from the Said are obliged to ſtop, and pay duties, according to the merchandize they contain. Here are broken columns, and remains of ancient edifices, which we have reaſon to ſuppoſe were thoſe of Cynopolis (the city of dogs), placed by Strabo and Ptolemy above Fenchi. Its inhabitants held dogs in great veneration, and the prieſts fed them

them with ſacred viands, in honour of Annubis, the companion and guardian of Oſiris. Strabo (*f*) marks the ſite of Oxyrinchus inland, at ſome diſtance from Cynopolis: ſcattered marbles and heaps of rubbiſh, round Behneſa, on the canal of Joſeph, determine the poſition of that ancient city (*g*), where the fiſh the Greeks called Oxyrinchus was held ſacred. The long plain which extends from the Nile to Bahr Youſeph is very beautiful; wheat, barley, flax, and beans grow, abundantly, in fields watered by rivulets: the dourra and ſugar-cane here riſe to a great height; the plants are all vigorous, and full of ſap; the trees all loaded with fruit, the picture of abundance inceſſantly delights the eye: but, alas! it is injured, disfigured by the aſpect of the huſbandman in rags, and the mud huts in which he mournfully reſts, after watering the rich fields with the ſweat of his brow, whoſe produce he muſt not enjoy: ſo true it is that wiſe laws make nations more happy than all the treaſures of nature.

Oppoſite Miniah is the village of Gerabia, and, farther up, that of Saouadi. Here the

(*f*) Lib. xvii.

(*g*) Pococke places Oxyrinchus where Girga now ſtands, which ſeems to me inaccurate; for Strabo poſitively ſays, Oxyrinchus was not on the banks of the Nile, but inland.

grottos of the Thebais begin, famous for the auſterity of the anchorets who retired hither during the primitive ages of Chriſtianity. They extend for twenty leagues, as far as facing Manfelout, and were quarries dug by the Egyptians. The hieroglyphics found in them atteſt their antiquity.

Above Saouadi begins a foreſt of dates, which reaches as far as the river. Near this is the iſle of Sohra, and villages continue, at ſmall intervals, which, by their number, variety of aſpect, and numerous inhabitants, diverſify and enliven the views. Near Rodda is the mouth of one of the branches of Bahr Youſeph, the other is higher, at the village of Tarout Eccherif. Norden notices only the firſt, and Father Sicard the ſecond, but they both remain. Deſcending the canal of Rodda, the banks of which are charming, we enter the grand bed of Bahr Youſeph, on the banks of which is the village Abouſir. A league to the ſouth are the ruins of an ancient city, which enrich the ſmall town of Babain. Some diſtance beyond is a curious monument; a rock ſmoothed by the chiſſel, in the body of which a grotto has been cut, fifty feet in diameter, and ſix deep. The bottom repreſents a ſacrifice to the ſun, which is ſculptured in demi-relief.

relief. On the right, two prieſts, with pointed caps, raiſe their arms toward him, and touch the end of his rays with their fingers: behind them two children, with like caps, hold cups for the libation. Three wood-piles, ſuſtained by ſeven vaſes, with handles, and placed under the ſun, bear ſlain lambs. On the left are two young maidens, who are only attached to the ſtone by the feet and back. The Arabs have broken off the heads, and disfigured them with their lances. Various hieroglyphics give, no doubt, the hiſtory of this ſacrifice, which I believe is meant to Jupiter Ammon, a ſymbolical deity, by which the ancient Egyptians denoted the ſun's entrance into the ſign of the ram. This animal was conſecrated to him, and they then celebrated the commencement of the aſtronomical year, and the renewal of light. The monument I have deſcribed, cut in hard ſtone, cannot but endure to the lateſt poſterity.

Near Babain is Touna (*h*), between which village and that of Abouſir the continuance of the remains of an ancient brick aqueduct, by which the waters were conveyed to the foot of

(*h*) Called, by Strabo, the Upper Tanis; near which he marks the courſe of the great canal. It contains the ruins of a temple of the ſun.

the mountains, may be traced. Coaſting Bahr Youſeph, we come to Tarout Eccherif, where is the principal mouth of this grand canal. Melaoui is three leagues farther to the north, a pleaſant town, ſituated in a fertile plain, where there is a conſiderable market. Proviſions of all kinds are here found in abundance, and exceedingly cheap. The ſurrounding villages compoſe a ſmall principality, which was formerly beſtowed on Mecca. The Emir Hadge, or prince of the Caravan, has a right to ſend a Sardar (*i*) here, as governor; and he returns to Grand Cairo, large tributes in grain, which he collects from the inhabitants, and which the Emir Hadge carries to the Scherif of Mecca. Four miles north of Melaoui is Achmounain, remarkable for its magnificent ruins. Among the hills of rubbiſh that ſurround it is a ſtately portico, little injured by time, a hundred feet long, twenty-five wide, and ſupported by twelve columns, the capital of which is only a ſmall cord. Each is compoſed of three blocks of granite, forming together ſixty feet in height, and twenty-four in circumference. The block next the baſe is merely rounded, and loaded with

(*i*) Sardar ſignifies governor, and general, uniting civil and military power.

hiero-

hieroglyphics, the line of which begins by a pyramid; the two others are fluted. The columns are ten feet diſtant, except the two in the centre, which, forming the entrance, have an interval of fifteen feet. Ten enormous ſtones cover the portico, in its whole extent, and theſe are ſurmounted by a double row; the two in the centre, which riſe with a triangular front, ſurpaſs the others in grandeur and thickneſs. The ſpectator is aſtoniſhed at beholding ſtones, or rather rocks, ſo ponderous, raiſed ſixty feet high by the art of man. The ſurrounding frieze abounds with hieroglyphics, well ſculptured, containing figures of birds, inſects, various animals, and men ſeated, to whom others ſeem to preſent offerings. This, probably, is the hiſtory of the time, place, and god in whoſe honour this monument was erected. The portico was painted red and blue, which colours are effaced in many places, but the bottom of the architrave, round the colonnade, has preſerved a gold colour ſurprizingly bright. The ceiling, alſo, contains ſtars of gold ſparkling in an azure ſky, with a dazzling brilliancy. This monument, raiſed before the Perſian conqueſt, has neither the elegance nor purity of Grecian architecture; but its indeſtructible ſolidity,

lidity, venerable ſimplicity, and majeſty, extort admiration. What muſt the temple, or the palace, have been, to which this was the entrance! I confeſs, Sir, ſurprize is wonderfully excited at beholding, amid the Turkiſh and Arab huts, edifices which ſeem the works of genii. Their age increaſes their value. Eſcaped the ravages of deſtructive conquerors, and bearing the impreſſion of ages and ages, they inſpire the contemplating traveller with awe. Modern Egyptians view theſe ſublime remains of antiquity with indifference, and ſuffer them to ſubſiſt, becauſe to deſtroy them would be too much trouble. Superſtition and ignorance believe they encloſe treaſures; wherefore, ſtrangers are not permitted to take a faithful drawing: this would expoſe them to the loſs of life, as what happened to Father Sicard proves. While he ſtood admiring the beauty of this portico, "Do not kindle thy cenſer," ſaid the Arab his guide, gravely, to him, "leſt "we ſhould be taken in the fact, and ſome "misfortune ſhould follow."—"What doſt thou "mean? I have neither cenſer, nor fire, nor "incenſe."—"That is a joke: a ſtranger, like "thee, doth not come hither purely out of cu-"rioſity."—"Why not?"—"I know thy "ſcience

" ſcience informs thee in what place the great
" coffer is concealed, full of the gold our fore-
" fathers have left us; and ſhould thy cenſer be
" ſeen, they would preſently think thou cameſt
" hither to open our coffer, by virtue of thy
" magic words, and carry off our treaſure."

Such, Sir, is the general opinion of modern Egyptians concerning Europeans, whom they think magicians, and imagine that, when taking the dimenſions only of their antiquities, they will be enabled to carry off their treaſures; nor will they ſuffer them to write, or draw, peaceably, but impede them all they can.

I have the honour to be, &c.

LET-

LETTER XXXI.

The country from Achmounain to Achmim. Enſina, formerly Antinoë; its extent, remains of columns, and gates, of beautiful architecture; not comparable to the portico of Achmounain. The principal towns on the banks of the Nile, with their ancient and modern poſition. Achmim, formerly Chemmis, or Panopolis. Remains of an antique temple which ſubſiſted in the age of Abulfeda. On the Serpent Haridi, with which the Makometan prieſts delude the people.

To M. L. M.

Grand Cairo.

LET us quit the portico of Achmounain, and croſs the Nile, to viſit the remains of Antinoë, thus deſcribed by Abulfeda: "Enſina (the "Arabic name) ſtanding toward the middle of "the Said, eaſt of the Nile, and oppoſite to "Achmounain, contains remarkable ruins of "ancient monuments."—"This ancient city "(adds the geographer of Nubia), ſurrounded "by well-cultivated fields, abundant in fruits "and

" and grain, is vulgarly called the city of the " magi (*l*), becauſe Pharoah ſent hither for " them, to come to his court." I will add ſome remarks on the preſent ſtate of theſe places. Adrian, whoſe ſhameful vices tarniſhed the ſplendor of his greateſt qualities, having loſt Antinous, his favourite, during his journey in Egypt, was deſirous to raiſe a laſting monument to his memory, and founded a city in his name, tracing the plan on level ground, and building it with royal magnificence. The city was half a league in circumference, and contained two principal ſtreets, forty feet wide, and interſecting each other, in the centre, at right angles. The lateral ſtreets were narrower, but equally ſtraight. The two principal ſtreets ended with four gates, ſome of which ſtill remain. There are three arched entrances to the moſt beautiful; that in the centre is forty feet high, twenty-two wide, and twenty thick; the

(*l*) Antinoë was built near the ruins of Abydus, where the Egyptians revere the oracle of the god Beſa, one of the moſt ancient in Egypt, and famous ſo late as the Emperor Conſtantius. Ammianus Marcellinus (lib. xix.) ſays, the neighbouring people all conſulted it, and aſſembled, at certain periods, to keep feſtivals in its honour; wherefore the Arabs called Antinoë, ſituated near Abydus, the city of the magi.

two

two others are leſs. The fronts of this gate are each ornamented by four pilaſters, in baſſo relievo, the capitals of which, of the acanthus leaf, project conſiderably. Eight Corinthian columns ſurrounded this fine gate, and equalled it in height, one of which only has eſcaped the ravages of time and man; the reſt are broken or deſtroyed, but their pedeſtals remain entire. Beſides this edifice there are heaps of rubbiſh ſeen, in various parts of the city, remains of cornices and entablatures which denote temples or palaces deſtroyed. If we may judge from the pedeſtals, found, at intervals, along the ſtreets, they were lined by a colonnade, that formed a portico on each ſide, where the inhabitants might walk in the ſhade, which muſt have produced a charming effect. Excluſive of theſe embelliſhments, one of the ſquares was ornamented by four grand columns of the Corinthian order. Three are deſtroyed, except the baſes; the fourth is perfect, and about fifty feet high: the ſhaft is compoſed of ſeveral ſtones; on the firſt of which is an ornament of oak foliage. On the pedeſtal is a Greek inſcription, half effaced (*m*), which ſhows it was dedicated

(*m*). It begins thus: *To the proſperity of Cæſar Marcus Aurelius*

dicated to Alexander Severus. The ſenate of Alexandria, on which he beſtowed many benefits, after erecting the famous column I ſo highly praiſed in a former letter, raiſed theſe other four, in honour of him, after his victories over the Perſians; for the oak foliage, on the pedeſtal of that which remains, was a token of victory among the Romans. Theſe, Sir, are the monuments beſt preſerved among the ruins of Antinoë, the founder of which, did not inſcriptions and hiſtorians declare, the arches of the gates (*n*), capitals of the columns, and want of hieroglyphics, would ſhow they were not Egyptian works. They are examples of the good taſte and elegance the Romans learnt from the Greeks, but not of that majeſty, ſolidity, and amazing grandeur, which the people of Egypt imparted to all their works, and which no other nation ever attained. The remains of Antinoë, though magnificent, are inſignificant

Aurelius Severus Alexander, pious, happy—Aurelius being prefect of the new Greeks of Antinoë, &c. This is legible on two of the pedeſtals, but almoſt effaced on the two others. See Father Sicard, *Lettres Edifiantes*, who gives the inſcription in Greek.

(*n*) Neither arch nor column of any of the Grecian orders can be found among the remains of ancient Egypt, but ſtones, aſtoniſhingly huge, abounding in hieroglyphicks.

compared

compared to the portico of Achmounain, although the latter is the moſt ancient by fifteen hundred years.

Near this city are the remains of the ancient Abydus, where was the oracle of the god Beſa, in which place a derviſe convent, named Sheik Abada, now ſtands. Antinoë was peopled by Chriſtians, toward the cloſe of the fourth century. Palladius ſays, there were twelve convents of nuns, and as many of monks; and, perhaps, the ruin of this ſmall city may be attributed to the prodigious number of people who, living in its neighbourhood, vowed celibacy. There are ſtill many Coptic monaſteries in the environs, the inhabitants of which are ſunk in poverty and ignorance. The fruitful plains which, according to the geographer of Nubia, were round Enſina, have diſappeared with the people, and barren ſands have uſurped their place.

Once more let us embark, Sir, and proceed up the river. Yonder we behold a continuation of grottos, in the mountain in the eaſt, formerly inhabited by anchorets, whoſe abſtinence is famous in church hiſtory. Their food was bread and water; though this auſtere and contemplative life is leſs aſtoniſhing than it might be thought,


MEDITERRANEAN
SEA
LAKE BOURLOS
LAKE
or
MENZALA
DESART
DESART
Seite
of Lake Mareotis
ALEXANDRIA
Canopic Mouth or Dibe
Pelusiac Mouth or Ellarouma
Ancient Pelusium
Ancient Heroopolis
Ancient Arsinoe
Ancient Patumos
Ancient Thaubastis
Ancient Tanis
Ancient Bubastis
Ancient Athribis
Ancient Memphis
GRAND CAIRO
Great Pyramids
Ancient Canal of Nekos
Ancient Canal of Sesostris
Ancient Canal of Darius
Ancient Canal of Ptolemy
Ancient Canal of Trajan
Ancient Canal of Adrian
Ancient Canal of Amrou
Ancient Canal of the Prince of the Faithful
Ancient Canal of Moez
Ancient Canal of Omar
Ancient Canal of Abdallah
Ancient Canal of Abdalaziz
Ancient Canal of Ali
Ancient Canal of Ahmed
Ancient Canal of Mohammed
Ancient Canal of Hakem
Ancient Canal of Mostanser
Ancient Canal of Mostali
Ancient Canal of Amir
Ancient Canal of Hafed
Ancient Canal of Dhaher
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thought, in a hot climate where temperance is a law of neceſſity, and meditation an enjoyment. The Nile, its groves, harveſts, and multitudinous boats, paſſing day and night, may be ſeen from theſe cells, and the thing moſt ſurpriſing is they had the reſolution to remain continually idle, amidſt that perpetual motion which they inceſſantly beheld. Theſe grottos extend as far as Manfelout, which ſmall town, on the weſt, ſtanding in a fertile country, is governed by a Cachef. The Turks have here ſeveral moſques, and a Coptic convent ſtands facing it, which is aſcended by means of a pulley; the monks being obliged to take this precaution againſt the avarice of the Arabs.

The high ſquare dove-cotes of the village Salem are ſeen at a diſtance, and, coaſting beſide a long iſle, the elbowing Nile brings us to Siout (*o*), a large, populous, well built town, where there is a lake dug which ſerves to water the grounds. Its gardens abound in vegetables and fruit trees; and its ſituation, on an artificial

(*o*) Pococke wrongly ſuppoſes Siout and Anteopolis the ſame. Ptolemy places Anteopolis higher, and on the other ſide of the river.—Strabo (lib. xvii.) ſays Lycopolis ſtood above the canal which runs into the lake Tanis. This is an error in copying: it ſhould be read lake Mœris.

mount, denotes it occupies the ſite of an ancient city: accordingly, veſtiges of Nicopolis are found, where the wolf was held to be a ſacred animal.

Half a league from the river, on the ſame ſide, ſtands Aboutig, a very pleaſant little place, formerly Aboutis, mentioned by Stephen of Byzantium. The Turks here ſtill cultivate, as in the time of Abulfeda, the poppy, of which they make opium, eagerly ſwallowed by the rich to inſpire agreeable reveries; the common people content themſelves with taking ſmall pills of cut hemp-leaves, faſting, which produce ſimilar effects. Aboutig is governed by an emir. The yoke of theſe Arab princes is leſs galling than that of the beys; the people enjoy more tranquillity under them, and are not ſo much expoſed to the ravages of the undiſciplined troops of Cairo. Theſe elders often diſcover that impartial juſtice, humanity, and affecting benevolence, with which the patriarchs governed their families.

The village Settefa, above Aboutig, has ſucceeded to the ſmall town of Apollo; is at ſome diſtance from the river, and partly inhabited by Copts. A very ſingular accuſation was here preſented againſt father Sicard. Two native Chriſtians

tians went to the governor, and told him the foreigner intended to nail up the banks of the Nile, with magical nails, and prevent the inundation by his enchantments. This declaration ſtrangely embarraſſed the Arab prince, who would have arreſted the learned miſſionary, had not a janiſſary, who travelled with him, become reſponſible for his perſon, and affirmed the Copts were ſlanderers. This incident, Sir, will give you an idea of the ignorance and ſuperſtition of modern Egyptians.

Among the numerous villages, on the banks of the Nile, is Thema, governed by a cachef; and, oppoſite, is a charming and large iſle. Silin, anciently Selinon, ſtands, half concealed, on the other ſide, under the mountains. Kau Elkebira is a miſerable place, built on the ruins of Anteopolis, which city poſſeſſed a magnificent temple, erected by the Egyptians, according to Diodorus, in honour of Antæus, who was vanquiſhed by Hercules. The portico only remains, ſupported by huge columns, and covered by vaſt ſtones, one of which is thirty feet long, and five wide. The golden and azure ceiling has preſerved the brilliancy of its colours, but this magnificent portico is full of dung; for the Turks aſſemble their herds there, and make a

ſtable of it; ſo highly do they value the greateſt works of antiquity! The villages Coum Elarab, Mechta, and Shah Toura, extend along the eaſtern bank, facing Zein Eddin. Tatha is governed by a cachef, and in part ſurrounded by an arm of the Nile. Nothing can be more agreeable than the neighbouring plains, more verdant, or wealthy in products, for which they are indebted to the river waters. The city of Venus, on the ruins of which Tatha is raiſed, could not have found a better ſite. After coaſting up the river, beſide the iſle of Shandouil, the high minarets of Achmim are ſeen far off. "Achmim," ſays Abulfeda, "is a large city of Upper Egypt, "on the eaſtern bank of the Nile, where is a "temple equal to the moſt celebrated of ancient "monuments, and built with ſtones amazing "for their ſize, on which innumerable figures "are ſculptured. Doulnoun (*p*) was a native "of Achmim." Though this city has not retained its ancient ſplendor, it is ſtill one of the fineſt in Upper Egypt, and governed by an Arab prince. The police is well regulated: the ſtreets are wide and clean; its commerce and agricul-

(*p*) Doulnoun wrote a treatiſe called Elmejarebat, Experiments, a copy of which ſhould be among the manuſcripts in the king's library at Paris.

ture

ture flouriſhing. Here are manufactories of cotton cloths and pottery, which are diſperſed throughout Egypt. This is the ſame city as the Chemmis of Herodotus (*q*), and the Panopolis (*u*) of Strabo. It has loſt its ancient edifices, and much of its extent, ſince the ruins of the temple Abulfeda deſcribes now ſtand north of the city, the only remains of which are ſome ſtones, ſo large the Turks could not move them, which contain many hieroglyphics, and one of them is ſculptured after an extraordinary manner. Four concentric circles are drawn within a ſquare, and the ſun is in the centre one. The two following, divided into twelve parts, include, one of them, twelve birds, and the other, twelve animals, nearly effaced, which ſeem to have been the ſigns of the zodiac. The fourth has no diviſions, but contains twelve human figures (*s*). The four ſeaſons are at the angles of the ſquare, beſide which is a winged globe. This ſtone,

(*q*) Herodotus ſays Perſeus was a native of this city, and that his deſcendants ordained feſtivals to him, here.

(*r*) The city of Pan. This deity was adored here.

(*s*) Repreſenting, as I ſuppoſe, the twelve gods, twelve months, and twelve ſigns of the zodiac. Herodotus, (lib. ii.) ſays the Egyptians firſt divided the year into twelve months, and named the twelve gods.

probably,

probably, belonged to a temple dedicated to the ſun, and the hieroglyphics indicated his paſſage through the ſigns of the zodiac, and his annual revolution; a teſtimony the Egyptians enjoyed aſtronomical knowledge from the moſt remote antiquity. The columns of this temple have been in part deſtroyed, to procure lime and mill-ſtones.

I muſt not quit Achmim, Sir, without mentioning its miraculous ſerpent. Above a century ſince, a Turkiſh prieſt, named Seheilk Haridi, who paſſed for a ſaint, died here, and had a tomb built over him, with a cupola, at the foot of the mountain, to which people came from all parts to pray. Another prieſt, profiting by their credulity, perſuaded them God had commanded the ſpirit of Seheilk Haridi into the body of a ſerpent, many of which, that are harmleſs, are found in the Thebaïs. One of theſe he had taught to obey him, and, appearing with his ſerpent, dazzled the vulgar, by ſurpriſing tricks, and pretended it had power over all diſeaſes. Some happy cures, which nature or imagination wrought, gave it great celebrity; and the ſerpent Haridi would no longer leave his tomb, except for princes and wealthy perſons. The ſucceſſors of this prieſt, following his

his principles, had little trouble to increaſe the credit of this advantageous error, and they affirmed, excluſive of its firſt virtue, it was immortal. Of this they pretended to make a public trial; the ſerpent was cut to pieces, in the emir's preſence, and depoſited, two hours, under a vaſe, where, as they raiſed it, the prieſts, no doubt, had the addreſs to ſubſtitute another. This miracle was proclaimed, and the immortal Haridi acquired new renown. They profit greatly by their deceit; people come from all parts to pray at the tomb: and, if the ſerpent appears from under the ſtone, and approaches the interceſſor, it is a ſign the ſick perſon ſhall be cured. You may well ſuppoſe, Sir, he appears not till an offering is made worthy of the wealth and quality of the perſon. In extraordinary caſes, when the ſick cannot be cured unleſs the ſerpent be preſent, a pure virgin muſt go and ſolicit; and, that they may be certain, a very young girl is choſen, who is decorated in a fine habit, and with a garland of flowers. After ſhe has prayed, the ſerpent, according to the prieſt's intention, makes circles round the young ſuppliant, and comes and repoſes upon her. The virgin, accompanied by multitudes of people, and vaſt acclamations, then carries it off in triumph.

triumph. 'Tis not in the power of reaſon to perſuade theſe credulous ignorant Egyptians they are the dupes of knaves; they believe as ſincerely in the ſerpent Haridi as in their prophet: the very Chriſtians no more doubt its virtues than the Turks, but affirm this ſerpent is the dæmon Aſmodeus, who killed the ſeven huſbands of the wife of Tobias, and that the angel Raphael, after having metamorphoſed him, brought him hither, that God might thus deceive infidels. The ſerpent has acted a miraculous part in the hiſtory of man; he ſeduced Eve, and, at the command of Moſes, devoured thoſe of the Egyptians, made Alexander of Aboniteichos paſs for a god, and now cures the ſick people of Achmim. This ſerpent is of the ſame ſpecies with thoſe Herodotus deſcribes, which were ſacred among the ancient Egyptians, who called them agathodaimones, (αγαθοδαιμονες) good genii; and they were the types of Cneph, a ſymbolical deity, ſignifying divine goodneſs.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.


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on 31 October, 2019

